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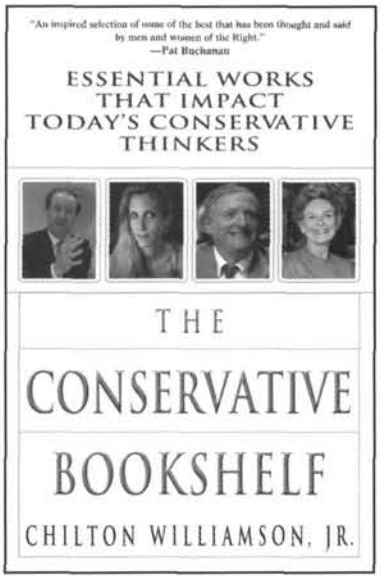
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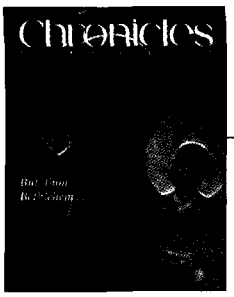

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On Enumerated Powers

My thanks to Stephen B. Presser for his review ("Sacred Texts '98," October) of my book *Reclaiming the American Revolution*. I certainly appreciate such a distinguished legal historian finding the work to merit his attention. One issue raised in Professor Presser's review is the constitutionality of the Sedition Act (which made criticism of the national government a crime). According to Professor Presser, I err in questioning the legality of the act because of my "uncritical adoption of Madison and Jefferson's 1798 reading of the First Amendment." He argues that "the freedom of the press" in 1798 simply meant no prior restraints on publication. Because the Sedition Act only punished critics of the national government after publication, Professor Presser finds the act constitutional.

I must respectfully disagree. The powers of Congress are enumerated in Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution. I can find no enumerated power that permits the regulation of speech or the press. The issue of restraint of speech did come up during the ratification debates. In response to those clamoring for a bill of rights, Alexander Hamilton (in *Federalist* 84) asked: "For why declare that things shall not be done which there is no power to do? Why for instance, should it be said that liberty of the press shall not be restrained, when no power is given by which restrictions may be imposed?"

Why indeed? Hence, the common-law definition of the freedom of the press and the language of the First Amendment are irrelevant to the Sedition Act's constitutionality. Until someone shows me an enumerated power permitting Congress to regulate speech, I will continue to argue that the Federalists' Sedition Act was unconstitutional.

—*William J. Watkins, Jr.*
Greenville, SC

Dr. Presser Replies:

Mr. Watkins and I will have to agree to disagree on this one. I suspect there may have been a few of the framing generation who might have thought Congress could pass no laws regarding seditious libel, and, by 1798, it had become a white-hot political issue. Still, not one sitting U.S. Supreme Court justice questioned the constitutionality of the statute while it lasted, and several of those had been instrumental in the framing and exposition of the Constitution of 1789 as well as the 1789 Judiciary Act, which gave the federal courts jurisdiction over "crimes and offenses" cognizable under the authority of the United States. I find it hard to believe they all got it wrong.

Moreover, Mr. Watkins goes a bit too far when he suggests that the 1798 act "made criticism of the national government a crime"; it singled out only false statements made with improper intent, and it simply tracked the English reforms in Fox's Libel Act of 1792. It would not have been the prevailing wisdom in the early years of our republic that false, malicious, and scandalous statements should be tolerated, even by the federal government. Article I, Section 8's "necessary and proper" clause would have been seen to justify legislation on the issue, and, it must be remembered, all but one of the justices believed that the Constitution also implied a common-law of crimes jurisdiction, presumably including the common-law crime of seditious libel. Again, there was an emerging party in 1798 around Jefferson and Madison that construed the First Amendment differently, but I do believe that most people and even most lawyers at the time of the framing of the Constitution would have interpreted the "freedom of the press" protected by the First Amendment to refer only to prior restraints and that seditious libel would have been regarded as outside that protection. As I indicated, though, this is a quibble. Most of Watkins' analysis is right on target.

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by Justin Raimondo

Second Thoughts

The War Party has suffered significant defections since the proclamation of our great "victory" in Iraq last year, and that's a good thing; but why would anyone take any of these people seriously? Take Tucker Carlson, the neocon punk with the P.J. O'Rourke haircut on CNN's *Crossfire*, a vehement supporter of the war in Iraq who is having second thoughts: "I supported the war and now I feel foolish," Mr. Carlson said.

> I'm just struck by how many people like me who were instinctively distrustful of government forgot to be humble in our expectations. The idea that the federal government can quickly transform the Middle East seems odd to me for a conservative. A basic tenet of conservatism is that it's much easier to destroy things than to create them—much easier, and more fun, too.

Yes, that's true—if you're a five-year-old. But what if you are a conservative pundit with a national audience?

If Carlson was ever even peripherally familiar with the most basic principles of human decency, let alone conservatism, it doesn't show. He feels foolish because he *is* foolish. The only proper thing to do, in his case, is to slink away into the night, never to be seen or heard from again.

After all, we aren't talking about going through a stoplight or telling one of those little white lies that make life so much easier for all of us: As of this writing, over 1,200 American soldiers have been killed, with close to 30,000 wounded—and we don't even know how many Iraqi casualties there have been, since the Pentagon doesn't bother to keep count.

On the liberal left, Kenneth Pollack, whose book *The Threatening Storm* did so much to convince the Kerry-Kennedy crowd to vote for going to war, had this to say in a recent interview with the *New York Times*:

> Q: In your new book, "The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict Between Iran and America," you seem to have abandoned your hawkish stance. Your last one, "The Threatening Storm," helped persuade many reluctant Democratic policy makers to support the invasion of Iraq.
>
> Pollack: I made a mistake based on faulty intelligence. Of course, I feel guilty about it. I feel awful.
>
> Q: It's nice to hear at least one American say that he's sorry.
>
> Pollack: I'm sorry; I'm sorry!

Is "I'm sorry" good enough? Isn't a more onerous penance required, considering the horrific consequences of the policy Pollack and his confreres pushed on the public? How about a moratorium on the pontifications of these people, who have yet to reflect on the fatal flaw in their vision that does not allow them to see that they visited so much unnecessary pain and suffering on the world? Fresh from giving his last bit of disastrous advice, Mr. Pollack is out with yet another book—though the embers from the fire he helped start last time have yet to cool. Perhaps he ought to take a sabbatical or even consider retiring from full-time punditry, as William F. Buckley, Jr.—another repentant warmonger—did. In his last article before handing *National Review* over to the David Frum/Jonah Goldberg/Rich Lowry Axis of Neocon Evil, the founder of that once readable journal declared:

> With the benefit of minute hindsight, Saddam Hussein wasn't the kind of extra-territorial menace that was assumed by the administration one year ago. If I knew then what I know now about what kind of situation we would be in, I would have opposed the war.

Having supported the biggest foreign-policy blunder since the U.S. entry into World War I, and having played an instrumental part in selling out the true conservative cause of smaller government and the preservation of the Permanent Things to a coven of intellectual witch doctors and foreign agents, Buckley did the only decent thing: He folded up his tent and retired from public life, falling on his sword—albeit only metaphorically.

Buckley, at least, has some sense of when to shut up: Not David Brooks, the *New York Times* columnist, however, who now says that America entered Iraq with "a childish fantasy" and is now "a shell-shocked hegemon." Yes, but wasn't Brooks one of the most childish of the fantasizers? Wasn't it he and his neoconservative brethren who led us into this battle—in the name of spreading Democracy from Beirut to Bangladesh? I wonder if he has anything to say to the wife or mother of a young soldier who has just returned from Iraq without the use of his limbs—or without any limbs at all. What will these people say to the ghosts of the war dead, the casualties of their ideological delusions and miscalculations?

Somehow, "I'm sorry" seems woefully inadequate.

In most cases, the expression of these second thoughts is but an opportunity for excuse-making. Fareed Zakaria, the editor of *Newsweek International* (a big booster of the war), began to consider the utter defeat of the idea that the Middle East could or should be "transformed" into Iowa with falafels: "All the big mistakes were made in the first three or four months, when the administration didn't send in enough troops and spurned international cooperation," Mr. Zakaria said.

> But the neoconservatives were cheering them on. Now that it's going south, they're simply blowing with the wind. In retrospect, the critics I have a lot of respect for are the realist conservatives who said long before the war that you're opening up a hornet's nest and the costs will outweigh the benefits.

The feeling is not mutual. Respect is what these repentant hawks deserve least of all. What they really require is a public horsewhipping. Zakaria is content to shift the blame for this unfolding disaster to the administration's methods, instead of laying it on the lunatic idea that we ought to invade and occupy a sovereign nation that had never attacked us. This is typical of the arrogance and hubris that

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afflicts our elites. These people are so divorced from reality that they do not even know what moral monsters they are.

Slate has a section of its website devoted exclusively to the subject of repentant liberal hawks such as Pollack, Paul Berman, and Thomas Friedman, raking themselves over the coals of their own fiery war rhetoric, trying to determine how and why they went wrong: Most conclude that, if only the Bush administration had done it *their* way . . .

The most egregious example of postwar penitence has got to be that of the *New Republic*. Howard Kurtz, writing about the magazine's second thoughts on the war, averred that the editors "broke with liberal orthodoxy by strongly supporting President Bush's war with Iraq." (That was surely not a break with the longstanding tradition of the *New Republic*, which was founded in the early part of the last century as a vehicle for bloodthirsty liberals who wanted to "make the world safe for democracy" in World War I.) TNR acknowledged error without admitting the need to repent: "We feel regret, but no shame. . . . Our strategic rationale for war has collapsed," confesses an editorial "hammered out after a contentious, 3 1/2-hour editors' meeting," according to Kurtz. "I wanted the editorial to be honest not just about the war and other people's mistakes but our mistakes," editor Peter Beinart says. "We felt we had a responsibility to look in the mirror."

Yet the *New Republic* was calling for war with Iraq long before Saddam's legendary "weapons of mass destruction" started making headlines. For them to come out and declare that they "feel regret, but no shame" is hardly surprising, because the concept of shame presupposes some kind of moral framework, which, in the case of TNR, has always been lacking. Their foreign-policy stance in recent years has involved a rather singular moral calculus: "Is it good for Israel?" Rather than acknowledge that, Beinart merely admits to his own shamelessness.

The shameless character of our left-neocons is matched by their mirror images on the right: In an editorial published in *National Review*, a magazine that supported the war with frenzied enthusiasm, the editors scolded the Bush administration for its "underestimation . . . of the difficulty of implanting democracy in alien soil." This, from a magazine that has turned itself into the *Pravda* of neo-Wilsonian internationalism, where writers Michael Ledeen and Victor Davis Hanson have ceaselessly agitated to *expand* the war, calling for the overthrow of Arab regimes throughout the entire region.

This leads me to wonder: Does anyone really learn from experience?

Some people do: Many of the pro-war liberals of the World War I era, such as John T. Flynn, became the anti-interventionist Old Rightists of the period leading up to the second great catastrophe of modern times, just as many who supported an always impossible "victory" over the Vietcong during the Cold War now see the utter futility—and outright immorality—of a very similar war in the killing fields of Iraq.

Others, however, learn nothing, forgive nothing, and admit nothing. Bill Kristol, editor of the *Weekly Standard*, has no second thoughts—no more than a wolf feels any remorse in devouring its prey. "Yes, we still support the war, but wish the postwar had been fought better and we've been critical of the administration," he says, even as it becomes clear that Iraq is simply Beirut, *circa* 1983, writ large. "We have no second thoughts about the justice and necessity of the war."

Spoken like a true killer.

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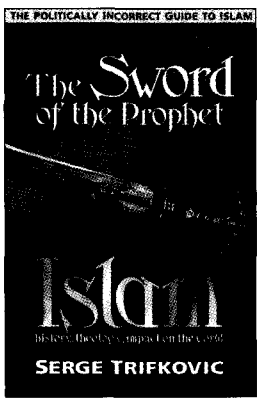

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THE ELECTION RESULTS are in, and those who are reading this piece have an advantage I do not: They know whether George W. Bush or John Kerry has won. (This issue went to press the day after the election.) Regardless of the outcome, however, we already know a good deal about what the next President will do, because Bush and Kerry are in substantial agreement over most issues, and their few differences are often more apparent than real. This convergence is all the more remarkable when we consider that many of the positions Bush and Kerry share are not especially popular with many Americans.

Consider immigration. Polls consistently show that a great majority of Americans favor both the elimination of illegal immigration and a substantial reduction in legal immigration. This is also an issue about which many people are passionate: CBS's Bob Schieffer, during the final presidential debate, indicated that he had received more e-mails about immigration than about any other issue. Yet neither Bush nor Kerry favors reducing immigration. Instead, both told Schieffer that they intend to push for legislation allowing potentially millions of new immigrants to come to America as guest workers, and both were in general agreement that the solution to illegal immigration is to legalize the illegal immigrants, not to require or even encourage them to go home.

A substantial number of Americans also consistently tell pollsters that they oppose free trade. Neither Bush nor Kerry, however, is willing to challenge free-trade dogma. When asked by Schieffer what he would tell someone who had lost his job to foreign competition, Bush promised that the federal government would pay for community college for the unemployed. Kerry boasted that he had told a union audience that he could not stop outsourcing, although he, too, promised to spend more federal money training people for jobs that will likely prove no more enduring than the wave of technical and financial jobs now being lost to India. Neither man suggested even the possibility of reconsidering the global free-trade regime that has devastated American manufacturing and depressed American wages.

A slight majority of Americans now tell pollsters that the war in Iraq was a mistake, and a substantial number of Americans consistently favor a less interventionist foreign policy. Yet neither candidate supports an American withdrawal from Iraq, and both advocate "victory" there, whatever that may mean. And the outlook is for yet more intervention, regardless of who wins in November. The neocon apparat that successfully lobbied for war in Iraq is now pushing for war in Iran, and Bush has done nothing to lessen the neocon influence in his administration, affirming, instead, that he will remain "on the offensive." And not only has Kerry criticized Bush for not being harder on Iran, he has spoken in favor of "humanitarian" intervention in such places as Darfur.

A substantial number of Americans also worry about the growing size of both the deficit and the federal government. Each candidate is committed to expanding both. The nonpartisan Concord Coalition has calculated that Bush's promises will increase the deficit by $1.326 trillion over the next four years, while Kerry's promises will cost some $1.269 trillion over the same period. Neither candidate has promised to eliminate even one federal program, and Bush, in particular, seems proud of vastly expanding the role of the federal government in education.

Even on social issues, the differences between Bush and Kerry are largely rhetorical. Neither candidate is willing to oppose affirmative action, despite its continued unpopularity with most Americans. Bush's opposition to "gay marriage" is thus far limited to saying nice things occasionally about a proposed constitutional amendment that he must know will never be enacted, and Bush is unwilling to go even that far on abortion, saying that America is not ready for the overturn of *Roe* v. *Wade*. He has promised that he will have no "litmus test" for his judicial appointees, making it all but certain that he will not decisively alter the balance of power on the Supreme Court, even if he has several appointments to make.

After four years of either Bush or Kerry, America will be farther down the road toward a future marked by an enormous and expanding federal government, endless interventions abroad, and a shrinking middle class whose standard of living has been eroded by continued free trade and mass immigration, not to mention the need to pay for all the federal government's follies at home and around the world. At best, we will see feckless opposition from the White House to the continuing displacement of Christian values from the public sphere. Americans alarmed by this prospect should begin the search now for a candidate who will actually stand for policies that are both rooted in the American tradition and supported by a majority of Americans—before that majority begins to disappear under the weight of the misguided policies and relentless leftist propaganda of the last several decades.

—*Tom Piatak*

IRAN is fast emerging on Washington's radar screen as the next major foreign-policy crisis. Several officials in the Bush administration—including the President himself—emphasized that the United States will never allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons. And, on that issue, there was no significant difference between President Bush and John Kerry.

Equally ominous, many of the hawkish luminaries who lobbied successfully for the United States to go to war against Iraq have now turned their sights on the Islamic regime in Tehran. Several neoconservative activists—most notably Michael Ledeen, a policy expert at the American Enterprise Institute—are pushing for Washington to adopt a goal of regime change in Iran. Most of them stress that they are not advocating that the United States launch an invasion, insisting that such an initiative would be unnecessary. There is supposedly so much public opposition in Iran to the mullahs that a U.S. propaganda offensive combined with financial and logistical assistance to prospective insurgents would be sufficient to topple the regime.

Such a thesis might seem more plausible if we had not heard similar arguments in the years leading up to the war in Iraq. Those arguments were quietly buried when the time for action arrived. Saddam's overthrow was carried out by a massive application of U.S. military power. If the United States were to adopt a similar strategy of regime change in Iran, it is likely that an even greater military effort would be required.

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U.S. officials should be wary of venturing down that path. The United States has had a long and turbulent history of involvement with Iran, and it seems as though every time Washington tries to solve one problem in the Persian Gulf region, it creates others that are even worse.

Hawkish elements who regard the Iranian government as a threat to America's security often act as though this country's interaction with Iran began in 1979 with the Islamic revolution and the subsequent hostage taking at the U.S. embassy. Iran's hostility to the United States did not come as a bolt of out the blue, however; Washington made that hostility almost inevitable. In 1953, the Central Intelligence Agency orchestrated a coup against the democratic government of Prime Minister Mohammed Mossedegh because he was deemed too friendly to the Soviet Union. The United States helped restore the shah to the throne, and that autocrat proceeded to brutalize and loot his country for the next quarter-century. When a coalition of secular and Islamic factions ousted the shah in 1979, the Iranian people had ample reason to hate the shah's chief patron.

Matters became worse after the hostage crisis. Washington embarked on a policy to isolate Iran economically and diplomatically—a strategy that failed almost from the outset because key U.S. allies refused to go along. Especially during the 1980's, the United States feared the spread of Iran's political and religious influence throughout the Middle East. To help block Iranian power and the potential ideological contagion of Islamic fundamentalism, Washington quietly backed Saddam Hussein's war against his eastern neighbor, further enraging Iranians. Although there was one abortive attempt during the Reagan years to explore the possibility of a rapprochement with Tehran (in the bizarre Iran-Contra affair), the relationship has remained tense and hostile to the present day.

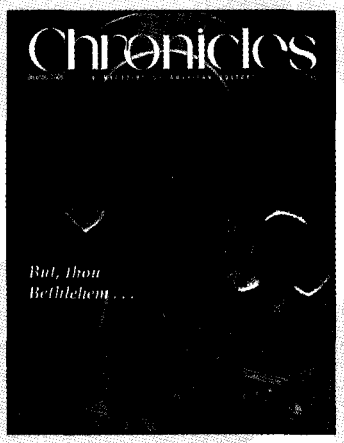
The main cause of tension today is Iran's nuclear program. Although the Iranians insist that the program is designed solely for peaceful, power-generation purposes, U.S. (and other Western) officials believe that it is aimed at building nuclear weapons. They are probably right, but this is another problem that the United States helped to bring about. Iran has noticed how the United States has treated such nonnuclear adversaries as Serbia and Iraq. It is hardly an irrational act for Tehran to conclude that the only way to prevent similar treatment in Iran's case is to have a nuclear deterrent—especially after President Bush linked that country to Iraq and North Korea in an "Axis of Evil."

No one can be happy at the prospect of the volatile and repressive government of Iran having nuclear weapons. It is, however, a manageable problem. The United States deterred the likes of Josef Stalin and Mao Tse-tung when the Soviet Union and China built nuclear arsenals. The 3,000 weapons in America's strategic arsenal should certainly be sufficient to deter Iran. As far as regime change is concerned, all advocates of freedom hope that the Iranian people will someday remove the mullahs from power. That job, however, is up to them, not to the United States.

—Ted Galen Carpenter

JACQUES DERRIDA, R.I.P. Passing away in a Paris hospital on October 8, philosopher Jacques Derrida (born in Algeria in 1930) has exited a scene in which he was once a conspicuous actor. Prominent in America since his post-structuralist lecture of 1966 and his following books, Derrida was perhaps the

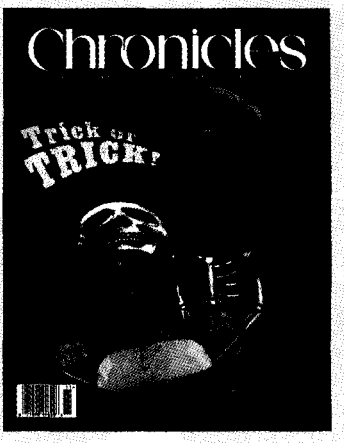
ABOUT THE COVER



Our cover this month is the Black Madonna of Częstochowa, proclaimed by King John Casimir in 1326 as Queen of Poland. Legend holds that it was written by Saint Luke the Evangelist and was brought to Constantinople in 326 by Saint Helena, mother of Constantine. Discovered in 1382 by Prince Ladislaus of Opole, the icon has remained in Częstochowa ever since.

The scars on Mary's face were made in 1430 by a thief, who struck the icon with a sword when he found that he could not physically move it from its home.

Our image is a replica of the icon—written in Poland, signed by Pope John Paul II ("with blessings"), and presented to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Częstochowa in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, in 1980.



We've received so many compliments on our November cover that we're offering a limited-edition poster of the cover, suitable for framing. Printed on high-quality 80-pound stock and covered in a UV-resistant coating, these posters will last for years to come. Quantities are limited, however, so place your order now!

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best-known literary theorist in the world for a quarter of a century. In the 90's, his "deconstructionist" mystique began to fade as the cult of "theory" began to diffuse in the *fin de siècle*. Must we say that his absence is a presence?

In the case of Derrida, there seems to have been a gap between the man and his reputation, a distinction between his technical philosophical achievements and their larger reception. Derrida had every professional justification to explore language as he did, playfully demonstrating the treacherous, slippery quality of semantics and discourse, the abyss that opens between the signifier and the signified. Another North African, Saint Augustine, had filled the gap between the signifier and the signified with faith in a transcendental signified, a.k.a. God. Another saint, Thomas Aquinas, struggled to reconcile the freedom of figurative language with a necessary stability of meaning. Jacques Derrida took aim at those saints, as well as at Plato and Aristotle, when he famously denied that there is a transcendental signified (or *Logos*), or even any "meaning" at all implied by any discourse, including his own. The deferral of reference could never be overcome, and so "deconstruction" was not destruction but the demonstration that the text necessarily contains its own self-contradiction.

Sometimes it seems we've stood and talked like this before, but I can't remember where or when. No, it's coming back to me now—a case, perhaps, not so much of the *déjà vu* but of the already-annoyed-by. Bishop Berkeley, as I recall, "proved" that the world was not really there, but, for him, God filled up the gap between mind and phenomena. Samuel Johnson famously and fallaciously "refuted" him by kicking a stone. David Hume had a lot of fun playing with the idea of causation but never stepped in front of any runaway carriages. Jacques Derrida indicated that language does not refer to reality in any meaningful way, but he expected those checks from the universities to be on time and not to bounce. Was the Crédit Lyonnais the transcendental signified, then, if God would not oblige?

Sometimes Derrida was brilliant, but more often, with his puns, jargon, and surrealistic bent, he was precious and self-indulgent, the philosopher-prince of this, the Third Sophistic. What was worse was the political and cultural interpretation to which Derrida was put, and he was glad to be used. The nihilistic relativism that deconstruction implied fit with the agenda of his day. Strangely enough—or perhaps I should say, familiarly enough—the professors of literature are rarely content with the privileges of their profession. They want to write not analyses or accounts but political prescriptions. The radicalism of the 60's morphed in the ways that we know, and much of the nonsense we have heard about "hierarchy" and "privilege" and Jane Austen—that colonialist, racist oppressor—was fortified by Derridean citations. And this junk thought was hardly rebuked as it emerged from privileged professors, snug in their tenured academic hierarchy, consuming goodies imported from cheap labor in the Third World. Chairman Mao and Mr. Pol Pot had an answer for such people, but the gap between the academic practice and the political theory was too much for such sleek academics to comprehend. Perhaps it was Derrida's jargon that did the cognitive damage.

So the Derridean moment has passed, and now Derrida has passed on as well. Still, for some people in this world, there is indeed a transcendental signified, Derrida to the contrary notwithstanding. The cult of Jacques Derrida was finally not a philosophical or even a sophistical one but a political one as destructive as it is obsolete. If Americans require for their admiration an ironic Frenchman, they might find more to love in the late Jacques Tati than in the late Jacques Derrida.

—*James O. Tate*

OBITER DICTA: We are pleased to announce a new column, ***The Morality of Everyday Life***, by **Thomas Fleming**, which will appear periodically at the back of the issue. Dr. Fleming will apply the principles elucidated in his book of the same name to new situations, offering practical moral insights.

Our poet this month is **Leo Yankevich**. Born in western Pennsylvania in 1961, Mr. Yankevich lives with his wife and three sons in Gliwice, Poland. His poems and translations have appeared in *Blue Unicorn*, *Cedar Hill Review*, *Edge City Review*, *Envoi*, *Iambs & Trochees*, the *MacGuffin*, *Poetry Nottingham*, *Staple*, the *Tennessee Review*, and the *Windsor Review*.

Our interior art is provided by our designer, **Melanie Anderson**. Mrs. Anderson received her B.F.A. from Northern Illinois University.

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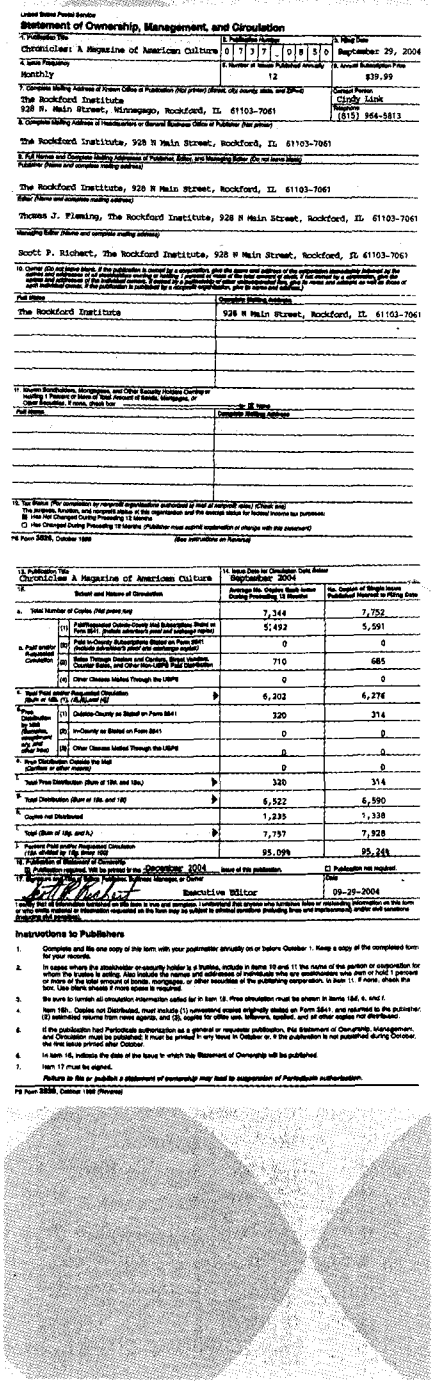

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by Thomas Fleming

The Plight of the Homeless

In one of Douglas Adams' very silly books, Zaphod Beeblebrox, the egocentric two-headed president of the universe, is condemned to undergo the ordeal of the Total Perspective Vortex. It is an excruciating form of torture that exposes the criminal to a sense of the infinite size of the universe and his own small place in it. The result is the annihilation of the self. The device was designed by a scientist who got tired of his wife telling him to put things in perspective. The nagging wife might just as well have been Adam Smith or William Godwin or any one of the liberal philosophers who insist that we look at ourselves as an impartial spectator or extraterrestrial would.

Liberals preach perspective, Epicureans advise indifference to friends and nation, and Buddhists long for Nirvana. Today, it is principally Christians who insist on a sense of place. *Our* universe is filled with special places: This earth, to which God deigned to send His Son; the land of Judea, where He was born; Galilee, which He regarded as home; the cities of the Greeks that gave us our civilization; and Rome, still the *urbs aeterna*, the seat of an empire of which our world, so full of itself and little else, is the merest afterthought.

When most of us think of place, however, it is not Rome or Bethlehem we have in mind but the place we came from. But how many of us live in the town, much less the home, in which we grew up? In American towns like Rockford or Charleston, to name only two of the places in which I have lived, the bright and ambitious are expected to move off to Chicago or Atlanta, or, better still, New York or Los Angeles. Small towns, even small cities, are for the losers, and Garrison Keillor may continue to bleat, in adenoidal tones, his saccharine tales of Lake Wobegone, but it is from the safe distance of St. Paul, New York, and Scandinavia.

John Crowe Ransom attributed much of America's cultural and spiritual malaise to the refusal to settle down, and it is true that many of the great American heroes have been drifters: Christopher Columbus, Capt. John Smith, Daniel Boone, Johnny Appleseed, to say nothing of Charles Lindbergh and Alan Shepherd, who are known principally for their dramatic exits from America. Americans, as we learned in school so long ago, were hardy adventurers who packed a Bible, a spare shirt, and two chickens and headed off, in search of adventure, to the New World.

This theme, however, has been overplayed. Outside of fairy tales and Arthurian romances, few men are foolish enough to go on quests. Most of our ancestors were near the end of their ropes—in a few cases, this was literally true—and they were looking for cheap land and the opportunity to make a fresh start. Once they arrived, they quickly put down roots. Although some hardy Celts pushed off to the Appalachian frontier, most settlers who had good land held on to it. We like to think of America as a youthful country, but, by the time of the Revolution, Englishmen had been living in Virginia for nearly 170 years, and many leaders of the rebellion—Washington and Jefferson, the Adamses, the Rutledges and Laurenses—were deeply rooted in the soil of Virginia, Massachusetts, and Carolina.

The exceptions, perhaps, prove the rule: The displaced Yankee rake Ben Franklin and that tax-collector without a country Tom Paine. Both of them were afflicted with the Enlightenment fantasies of objective rationalism that have done so much to undermine the sense of place and loyalty our ancestors brought with them from Old Europe. Men of the late 18th century, following the philosophers, were learning to liberate themselves from prejudice and superstition, as they called tradition and religion, and to see the universe not as the Creation of a God Who made the world and saw that it was good but as a vast mechanical system in which the place of man was very small, and the place of the individual man infinitesimal.

Enthusiasts for the French Revolution were no longer interested in improving a single nation. Democracy in one nation was reactionary. The true radicals, like Paine and his friend Anacharsis Clootz, had to be citizens of the world. Clootz, proclaiming the "nullity of nations," headed the foreign delegation to the French National Assembly. As an Hébertiste, he suffered the penalty his party would have inflicted on much of France. His buddy Paine narrowly escaped the same fate and died in America, one of his many homelands. His demise in Greenwich Village seems to have cursed the place to this day and made it the natural home of bad painters and worse writers. Paine was buried in unconsecrated ground on his own farm, but his archnemesis William Cobbett, in a fit of uncharacteristic and inappropriate generosity, had the corpse dug up and brought to England for burial in a patriotic monument he intended to construct. Since Britain refused to rescind the order of outlawry passed upon a disloyal subject, the bones of the wandering tax man had to pass into the hands of a receiver. *Sic semper omnibus rerum novarum molitoribus*!

Even Tom Paine grew tired of his life as perpetual revolutionary and represented himself as a respectable American man of property. There are even stories that he repented of his atheism on his deathbed. What did he have to lose? Young men are thrilled to discover that their parents and ancestors are wrong on all the essentials, but, as the blood cools and they no longer think themselves immortal, they begin to hear the sad old music, reminding them how briefly they walk upon the earth, how faint are the footprints they leave. "Why ask after my ancestry?" is Glaucus' famous reply to Diomedes in the *Iliad*. "Like leaves blowing in the winter wind are the generations of men."

Glaucus, wise beyond his young years, is not taking time in the midst of a battle to inform his Greek enemy of the obvious fact that generations are born and pass away. Our situation is more humiliating than that. This entire generation passes away, scattered by the winds of time, until, in three generations, no one is left to remember what we looked like or what our voices sounded like. In another generation, we cease even to be a family anecdote. Our place in

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the scheme of things, if looked at from a sufficiently enlightened perspective, is nowhere.

Glaucus, however, was not enlightened. Although Homer's Achaeans had a gloomy view of the afterlife, they did celebrate the deeds of their ancestors and worshipped the gods of their native places. Despite the melancholy tone of Glaucus' question, he does remember six generations back to the grandfather of his namesake, who was his own great-grandfather. Like the Romans and many Christians today, Greeks paid tribute to their dead ancestors in religious ceremonies that served to consecrate the house. Until the philosophers taught educated Greeks to think in universal terms, the citizen of a *polis* was rooted in the sacred soil of Attica or Boeotia and, if he was attentive, knew the names of the gods and *daimones* of every hill and spring.

Early Romans were, if anything, more reverent, and it would be the work of a lifetime to memorize the names of every little god who presided over the first plowing, the second plowing, the sowing, weeding, harvesting, storing—to say nothing of the malicious spirits who inflicted the plants with mold or rust or weevils. A medieval European peasant had almost as many neighborhood saints and martyrs as a Greek or Roman peasant, and these mysterious and friendly powers, commemorated in rustic shrines and local festivals and in carved stone and stained glass within the church, made the landscape bristle with energy and meaning. Now the festivals are put on for the tourists who visit the church in busloads, and, where the glass has not been broken, its stories are forgotten.

Every civilized society goes through a phase of "enlightenment," and some, if they are lucky, survive it. The sophists of the fifth century B.C. taught their students that man is the measure of all things, that values are conventional and not rooted in nature, that we know nothing of the gods, that might makes right. Socrates, although a genuinely irritating man in many respects, saw the problem being created by atheism and moral relativism, but neither he nor his best student Plato understood the danger inherent in their own tendency to treat political and social life in abstract and universal terms. Plato's *Republic* might just as well have been called *Utopia*. Aristotle, fortunately, has provided the permanent corrective to the Socratic moral heresies, but it was not the students of Aristotle who dominated the later Greek approach to politics but the Epicureans, who taught men to feign interest but cultivate indifference to their local community, and the Stoics, who preached the doctrine of world citizenship. Although both schools were to have pernicious effects during the Enlightenment, the Romans converted Stoicism into a pragmatic, albeit austere, creed of duty. The emperor Marcus—who divided himself into, on the one hand, universal man and, on the other, a particular Roman born into a certain family—is a long way from the Phoenician confidence man who founded the school.

Good character and good intentions can partially convert a philosophical sow's ear into a silk purse. Look how Jefferson sidestepped his own nonsensical theory of natural rights when it was a question of defending Virginia. The Enlightenment that infected Jefferson, like the sophistic movement in fifth-century Greece, entailed a rejection of the particular and local in favor of the universal, of the sacred and mysterious in favor of the secular and rational. Demystification, like so many other bright ideas, sounds better in the morning than it does in the dead of night. If my poor human life cannot be given meaning by tradition and ritual, then I shall carve out my own destiny, like Robespierre or Napoleon or Mussolini, and, if nations will not obey me, there is the heroic road taken by the fictional Raskolnikov or the all-too-real serial killers who have cut such a swathe through our post-Christian world.

Most Americans, hell-bent on success, do not dream of conquering nations or murdering our neighbors. Our vast ambitions are defined by bigger cars, bigger houses, bigger blondes. In John Huston's *Key Largo*, when Rocco the gangster (Edward G. Robinson) is asked what he wants, he does not know how to answer until Humphrey Bogart tells him, "I know what you want. You want more." More is the creed of a lost people. "He who dies with the most toys wins," reads a sign I used to see in expensive tackle shops. Like children piling up stuffed animals on the bed, we think our toys can shield us from the great emptiness we really believe in, and, even if we go to church, it is neither a great cathedral built to the greater glory of God nor a humble chapel where the faithful pray. No, our churches must have big-screen TV's and youth choirs waving their arms as they bellow loud commercial music that might be used to advertise the bogus beer we drink. Some of us demand song-and-dance numbers more appropriate to the midway of a county fair, and we expect to be told our Christian duty by wavy-haired, tooth-capped preacherboys who could fill in for one of the Chippendales—anything to distract us from the thought that we are going to die alone, and no matter how pretty the plot we have chosen in the "memorial garden," our corpse is one plant that is not going to come up again in the spring. In thinking that pagan thought, we have already made our existence Hell, but we have not even the pagan comfort of thinking that our flimsy afterlife will be consoled, once or twice a year, by ritual prayer and feeding administered by descendants who are both pious and a little bit afraid.

I am saying nothing that has not been said before by the Agrarians, and by Pound and Eliot.

> Unreal City,
> Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
> A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
> I had not thought death had undone so many.
> Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,
> And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.

Dante's vision of Hell has become Eliot's London. Eliot was going mad as he wrote *The Waste Land*. He found some sanity in joining the Church of England and in becoming a kind of English patriot, as the local references in the *Four Quartets* suggest.

For many of us who have spent our lives moving and traveling, it is too late to put down deep roots in the soil of California—or of Illinois, on whose people and identity Edgar Lee Masters long ago pronounced the eulogy. We can do our best, however, to love the places in which we find ourselves or to move to places we can learn to love, knowing that all such particular and partial loves are preparation for the full love we shall only know when we finally make our way home to where we belong. c

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Poland, New Year's Day, 1982
by Leo Yankevich

The final snow of the year, riddled and hard,
assailed by wind and rain, still covers the field,
while heaven above, a milky upturned ashtray,
lingers like a promise never fulfilled.

Smoke rises past the limbs of walking trees
toward blocks of flats that are a thousand greys.
Coal miners cough laments down muddy streets
to greasy taverns, and in shop displays

Christmas trees thirst for drink in dented pots.
Coal hills lie waiting for ice picks and shovels
as flocks of children drag ramshackle sleds
toward the toppled ruins of Eskimo hovels.

And at the roadside shelter Jesus sleeps
in the cradle of his weeping mother's arms,
the light that leaks through small cracks in the roof—
forsaken as the sparrows that chant him psalms.

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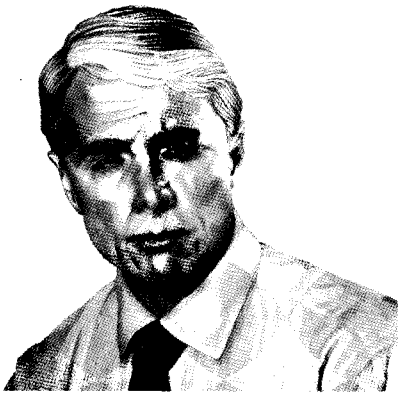
by Roger D. McGrath

Red Over Black



For hundreds of years, perhaps thousands, the Indians of North America practiced slavery. Until the 18th century, those enslaved, for the most part, were other Indians. The tribes of the Pacific Northwest, for example, raided constantly, principally to secure slaves. The populations of some villages were one-third slave. There is even an instance of a Russian seal- and otter-hunting ship running aground and Indians enslaving the crew. The Pequot of the Northeast made slaves and vassals of hundreds of their neighboring Indians, which explains why the tribes of the Pequot region allied themselves with the English colonists in the Pequot War. On the Great Plains, the Sioux enslaved captured Arikara and eventually reduced Arikara villages to a state of vassalage. When Coronado reached New Mexico, he found the Pueblo Indians holding Plains Indians as slaves.

By the middle of the 1700's, though, various tribes, especially the Five Civilized Tribes of the Southeast, began to acquire black slaves. By the end of the century, the Cherokee owned nearly a thousand; the Creek, Seminole, Choctaw, and Chickasaw, several thousand more. The numbers grew sharply during the early 19th century. When the tribes were removed to Indian Territory, mostly during the 1830's, they took thousands of black slaves with them. Accompanying the Cherokee on their "Trail of Tears" were some 2,000 black slaves.

The tribes enacted their own slave codes that grew progressively harsher as the years passed. The Cherokee constitution of 1827, for instance, prohibited slaves from owning property, selling goods, marrying Indians, voting, or consuming alcohol. The Cherokee subsequently adopted laws that prohibited teaching blacks to read, instituted the death penalty for a slave who raped a Cherokee, and prohibited free blacks from living within the Cherokee Nation. Slaveholders were given great latitude in dealing with their chattel property. One Cherokee buried a slave alive as punishment for robbery. Others were beaten to death. The Five Civilized Tribes cooperated fully with the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Laws, whether this meant returning slaves to white owners or to Indian slavemasters. In 1842, in an organized action, 35 black slaves stole firearms and ran away from their Cherokee owners. Stealing horses and mules along the way, the fugitive slaves fled to the Creek Nation. Although the Creeks and Cherokee were often at odds, the Creeks aided the Cherokees in tracking down the runaways and returning them to their owners.

During the 1850's, slavery reached its peak among the Five Civilized Tribes. The Cherokee, numbering only about 20,000 themselves, owned nearly 5,000 black slaves; the Choctaw, 2,500; the Creeks, 2,000; and the Chickasaw and Seminole, about 1,000 each. To protect their slave property, the Five Civilized Tribes sided with the Confederacy when the Civil War erupted. Several Indian units were organized for service in the Confederate Army, including the 1st and 2nd Cherokee Mounted Rifles, the 1st Choctaw and Chickasaw Regiment, the Choctaw Battalion, the 1st Creek Regiment, the Osage Battalion, the Seminole Battalion, and, eventually, the Indian Cavalry Brigade.

Many of the Indians fought alongside their white Confederate comrades at the Battle of Pea Ridge in the northwest corner of Arkansas over two bloody days in early March 1862. Leading the Cherokee Mounted Rifles at the battle was the highly competent, Georgia-born, mixed-blood Cherokee Stand Watie, who had been commissioned colonel in the Confederate Army nine months earlier and was the leader of the Knights of the Golden Circle, a strongly pro-slavery and pro-Southern-rights group of Cherokee. On the first day at Pea Ridge, Watie led his Mounted Rifles in a bold charge to capture several Union artillery batteries. On the second day, he and his Cherokee fought a delaying action, allowing the orderly retreat of the Confederate Army. Many Choctaw performed far less admirably. While lingering behind the retreating Confederates to scalp and loot, they were surprised by advancing Union troops, and most of them were killed.

For the rest of the Civil War, Stand Watie and his men operated from Indian Territory, conducting raids into Union-held Missouri and Kansas. Colonel Watie was particularly effective in intercepting trains of supply wagons that ran between the Union posts of Fort Scott in Kansas and Fort Gibson in Indian Territory. His actions cost the Union more than two million dollars in materiel. In May 1864, he was promoted to brigadier general, the highest rank achieved by an Indian during the Civil War. Taking command of the Indian Cavalry Battalion, he continued raiding, tying down thousands of Union troops that were badly needed in the eastern theater of the war. At Pleasant Bluff, he captured the Union steamer *J.R. Williams*, loaded with supplies for Fort Gibson.

In the meantime, hundreds of black slaves took advantage of the turmoil created by the war and fled to Kansas. Some of them enlisted in the Union Army as members of the 1st Kansas Colored Infantry, returning to Indian Territory to fight in battles with the Indians at Honey Springs and Cabin Creek.

When Lee surrendered at Appomattox in April 1865, Watie keep his brigade under arms. He did not formally surrender until the end of June, making him the last Confederate general to do so. He would become one of the most prominent symbols of the Lost Cause.

The 13th Amendment, ratified in the fall of 1865, abolished slavery in the United States as a whole, but not among the Cherokee and the other peoples of the Five Civilized Tribes. Although the Indians were "under the protection of the United States," it was unclear how the Constitution applied to them. As a consequence, blacks remained as slaves in Indian Territory until July 1866, when the U.S. government negotiated new treaties with the various tribes that included specific clauses prohibiting slavery.

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Finding Eden

The Paradise of Fools and Its King

by Hugh Barbour, O.Praem.

"Likewise also the chief priests mocking said . . . Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross that we may see and believe."

I have been a citizen of the sovereign state of California for most of my life. I can guarantee you, *Alta California* is not merely a result of the proverbial dreamin', a state of mind, but an actual place. Its motto, which I reckon must thus be mine as well, loyal subject that I am, is *Eureka*, "I have found it." Gold-bearing earth, as one might imagine, is the implied antecedent. Is the Golden State really not just a state, but a natural place, a destination, or even a destiny? Is this motto a statement or—niceties of Greek particles aside—a question? Have I found in this place my true home? Is this a real *inventio loci*, not merely rhetorical art, but natural necessity?

"We have found Eden." *Eurekamen Edem.* So reads the monogram at the foot of the Calvary depicted on the full scapular of the great habit of the Orthodox monastic. Eden is, of course, the *terrestrial* paradise, not the celestial one. A monastery, a place of self-denial and ascetic struggle, hardly suggests a place of delight. Then, perhaps, such an exclamation should be taken allegorically as meaning Heaven, or beatitude, or salvation, rather than the very corporeal garden of immortality and incorruption. Yet the Calvary this motto inscribes is undoubtedly a physical place as well as a spiritual archetype. Might the Christian *agonistes pneumatikos* have found an Eden which is a concrete physical place as well? To speak as a medieval schoolman (or, to be fair, as Isidore of Seville and Gregory of Nyssa much earlier), does he, in fact, dwell in his Eden as a natural place—that is, as an extended body materially contained and resting in a quantity formally fixed in relation to the center of the earth?

Now, let us set aside any sophisticated tendencies we might have acquired from professional educators to deconstruct the ideal Christian's claim to have found Eden in terms of the "nonlocal universe" we are supposed to inhabit, one that has become less and less a topographical reality since Galileo and is not even a graphical one since Einstein. Paradise, Heaven, Hell, and, as your doctrine permits, Limbo and Purgatory, have been for some time conceived as mere states rather than as places, and so it is small wonder that now not even the physical universe is to be understood as located or locating. Perhaps soon those who hold that there is any such thing as a place at all will join the ranks of naive "fundamentalists."

Yet, for ancient and medieval minds, there was simply no question that Earth, Heaven, and Hell were places in the corporeal sense and that their locations were known, even if the latter two were ordinarily unreachable. Purgatory was a place as well, although there was some little speculation as to its location. Man's present and ultimate places were not a matter of dispute; rather, it was the bodily, local reality of the *original* place of Man that engendered a formal theological question. In his *Commentary on the Sentences*, and in his *Summa Theologica*, Thomas Aquinas, for example, never poses the question of whether Heaven, Hell, or Purgatory are places, but in the *Summa*, he does pose the question regarding Eden: "On the place of Man, which is Paradise: whether Paradise is a bodily place." The question comes up, on examining the objections given, primarily from a scientific point of view. Quite simply, no one has ever found this place on Earth, for its four rivers and other characteristics do not match any known place even to those who have "most diligently" sought it out. But a place it is, Saint Thomas asserts, located in "the East," but perhaps it cannot be found by reason of the cherubic ministry which prevents its discovery. Enoch and Elijah are there, in expectation of their return to their postlapsarian places at the end of the world, as described in the book of Revelation.

Yet, even so, this Californian Christian dares to cry out with anyone else who cares to join him, both to those who say there is no such place and to those who say it cannot be found: *Eureka*, "We have found Eden." Where? Let me explain. The ancient notion of natural place, in its sheerest formality, prescinding from the outmoded cosmology with which it is unnecessarily associated, means simply this: Each bodily thing has a natural tendency, all things being equal, to rest in the bodily context that best favors its conservation and formation in being. Thomas Aquinas explains that, since the first man was immortal in body by a divine gift and not simply by nature, Adam was made from the earth outside of paradise, and then, as Genesis relates, God placed him in the Garden, which was the natural place fit for the habitation of an immortal man, with the external climate and location that favor human health supplementing the internal power of immortality given to his soul. There, Eve was made, and their children (alas for us!) would have been born according to the normal way of human generation (less often, yet with greater pleasure, the Angelic—but still humane—Doctor points out), but without the corruption of death, until they should be translated, body and soul, to the empyrean heaven. Outside the Garden, the rest of the Earth was created as it is now, a place of generation and corruption, of birth and of death.

It is in this world that human societies must now be set up. On examining Aquinas' little treatise *De Regno*, written for

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the Lusignan crusader king of Cyprus, one finds that it is with the original paradisiacal state of fallen man in mind that he describes the work of a king. The king must take the Creator as the model of government in founding and ruling the state. Thus, his first concern is the spiritual goodness of his people, expressed in worship, ordered to the life of immortality, the heavenly goods offered by the Christian priesthood. The king's next concern is the proper place of his city, which must have qualities conducive to human procreation and longevity, a climate like that described for Eden, while taking fallen nature into account:

> The founder of a city and kingdom must first choose a suitable place which will preserve the inhabitants by its healthfulness, provide the necessities of life by it fruitfulness, please them with its beauty, and render them safe from their enemies by its natural protection . . . A spot where life is pleasant will not be easily abandoned nor will men commonly be ready to flock to unpleasant places, since the life of man cannot endure without enjoyment. It belongs to the beauty of a place that it have a broad expanse of meadows, an abundant forest growth, mountains to be seen close at hand, pleasant groves and a copiousness of water . . . There is another means of judging the healthfulness of a place . . . the presence of many and vivacious children, and of many old people.

By the above standard of kingly government, this much is clear: Our rulers have not been taking care of us, lo these many years, not since our revolution, or anyone else's. In our day, Thomas would not have written *De Regno* for the king of Cyprus but an exegesis of Psalm 146 (145):3 for, let us say, the editor of *Chronicles*. "*Nolite confidere in principibus.*" ("O put not your trust in princes.") Now, most us of live in a place based on whether we can make a living there, since our society, unlike the one described and praised by Aquinas, is based on commerce. And, as thousands of invisibly but politely nodding subcontinental tax experts will tell you, it barely matters where you live anymore. In spite of the Mediterranean (Californian?) ambiance presented as an ideal, it is now a necessary place only for those who come to pick grapes and strawberries at piece rate. We have, after all, modern technology and medicine to guarantee our comfort and longevity anywhere, and, as for procreation, well . . .

Exactly. Procreation is the key to understanding how we have, or can find, Eden, since we have no Christian princes in whom to trust. The ancient blessing over the newlywed spouses in the Roman Missal tells us that the procreative union of man and woman in marriage is the one and only blessing not taken away by the punishment for original sin: *quae sola nec per originalis peccati poenam nec per diluvii est ablata sententiam.* Now, if this blessing was not taken away, it must be, like the medicinal penalties, a means of repairing the damage done, a means of redemption. Those words of the nuptial blessing are spoken by the priest after the Lord's Prayer, when the Body and Blood of Christ are lying on the altar as a memorial of His sacrifice on Calvary, the sacrifice of the New Adam, the Bridegroom of our fallen race. Calvary and procreation: two remedies for the expulsion from Eden. Little wonder that, in Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the chapel of Golgotha is called the "Chapel of Adam" and that right by it is the marble mound called by the ancient cartographers the *omphalos*, the navel of the world.

Under the cross on the scapular of the Orthodox monk's great habit is found another monogram inscription bearing the sentence "The place of the skull has become Paradise." Christ suffered outside the city in the place where Adam's fallen children were buried. It is He Who cried, "And if I be lifted up from the earth I will draw all things to myself." His Cross is the natural place of regeneration, and the fallen world of which the Cross is the true center is as natural a place as was Eden for its one prelapsarian blessing: the begetting of children.

It is this blessing the monk forgoes, like Christ Himself, not finding a place to lay his head, in order to point the way to Heaven. Since the world began to drive out the vigilant monks from their crucified gardens, it has been preparing for a second fall, one which, unlike the first, is irreparable because it rejects the only blessing left: marriage and family. Soon families, too, may find themselves relegated to the savage reserves of a Brave New World. But then, with the monks, they will be the only real places left in the "nonlocal universe." There, bodies and souls will still be born and die and rise.

Life in a well-ordered society, one that is really our place because it conserves and forms our lives for the good, is no more or even less of an historical possibility for us today than to gain re-entry into the earthly paradise. We are truly more than ever "displaced persons," not having here a lasting city. If we gather our wives and little ones around the altar of the Cross and Its chaste ministers, however, we retain the only blessings not threatened by the second fall and the second death. Even as we live in California, or in any other state, we shall find our natural place in an Eden as real as our bodies—and as His Body—until we are drawn to an even better place. Yet, I warn you, this will come about only when families have had to join the mocked procession described by the unmonastic Milton, who was more worldly than he knew:

> . . . Then might you see
> Cowls, hoods, habits, with their wearers tossed
> And fluttered into rags . . .
> The sport of winds. All these upwhirled aloft,
> Fly o'er the backside of the world far-off,
> Into a Limbo large and broad, since called
> The paradise of fools.

"California, here I come." c

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At Home in the Cosmos

Dante *Versus* the Modern Imagination

by John Francis Nieto

Nelson Head, a boy in a story by Flannery O'Connor, is reared in the rural South, with little sign of education and in obvious isolation. Yet the boy is arrogant to the point of impudence, because he was born in the city. To cure him of this, his grandfather takes him into the city, only to find Nelson bristling with pride in his origins. To curb his arrogance, Mr. Head has the boy stick his head into the sewer entrance.

> Then Mr. Head explained the sewer system, how the entire city was underlined with it, how it contained all the drainage and was full of rats and how a man could slide into it and be sucked along down endless pitch-black tunnels. At any minute any man in the city might be sucked into the sewer and never heard from again. He described it so well that Nelson was for some seconds shaken. He connected the sewer passages with the entrance to hell and understood for the first time how the world was put together in its lower parts. He drew away from the curb.

Nelson is disposed to hearing Dante's *Divine Comedy*. He is ready to find hell *somewhere*—and somewhere *nearby*. More importantly, he expects that the world "was put together." He thinks that there is an order among its parts and that this order can be seen with his eyes and grasped by his mind, at least in part. Further, he sees his own place within this order and is aware of certain consequences of his actions. After hearing his grandfather's elaboration, he was "for some seconds shaken," and "drew away from the curb."

I suspect that most readers find Nelson Head naive, and I agree. Dante, too, for all his sophistication and art, seems to us in many ways "childish," but we must be cautious of the modern feeling of contempt for medieval thinkers. Naivete—an unaffected, artless approach to reality—is the fundamental charge the Enlightenment has made against medievals and medieval culture—a charge made maliciously, though not altogether without reason. We can easily imbibe such a contempt for ordinary sense experience and the use of "common sense." Dante offers us the most complete and articulated medieval imagination of the universe, but we can become too sophisticated to appreciate and profit from it.

The primary impediment to this appreciation and profit is the imagination of the universe that pervades modern culture and has replaced Dante's. In his *Pensées*, Blaise Pascal describes this imagination in a chilling manner:

> When I consider the brief span of my life absorbed into the eternity which comes before and after—*as the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but a day*—the small space I occupy and which I see swallowed up in the infinite immensity of spaces of which I know nothing and which know nothing of me, I take fright and am amazed to see myself here rather than there: there is no reason for me to be here rather than there, now rather than then. Who put me here? By whose command and act were this time and place allotted to me?

This modern imagination of the world received its most complete form in Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*, or *The Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*. There, he proposes, with an elaborate and admirable mathematical apparatus, the theory and "picture" of universal gravitation or heaviness. It is, according to Newton himself, justification of the claim by the atheist poet Lucretius that everything is falling.

When I call the works of Dante and Newton *imaginations*, I am contrasting them with *understandings*. An *understanding* leads the mind to what is most intelligible about the matter discussed. An *imagination* resolves to what can be held together in a picture. This does not exclude contradictions. For example, sometimes Dante's hands pass through the bodies represented in the *Commedia*; at other times, these bodies feel him kick or pull. This does not dissatisfy imagination, but it may provoke confusion in the intellect. Newton's work is not a work of understanding. It does not explain motion, space, and time, nor does it prove that its concept of inertia answers to anything in reality. Its synthesis, admittedly magnificent, demands only that we imagine these principles with sufficient clarity.

Today, we all share this imagination of vast, empty space in which bodies, more or less round, move with some regularity, unless disturbed. Since it cannot provide an ultimate grasp of reality, however, this imagination keeps us from seeing what is right before us.

There are numerous ways in which Galileo Galilei first formed a modern imagination of the universe. Some of these go back much further than his own time, even to the ancient world. However, they are not, until Galileo, elements of a common imagination. Galileo observed by telescope that Jupiter has moons and that the Sun has "spots." Now, either discovery may seem to have an insignificant effect on a "picture" of the universe. Each demands, however, a new imagination of all its parts.

Galileo's discovery that four bodies move in circles about Jupiter in the manner in which our Moon moves about the Earth proved that the Earth is not the *only* center of circular movement. This discovery makes clear that a center of circular movement may itself be moving. For, if moons travel both around Jupiter and around the Earth, and Jupiter seems to move around

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the Earth, then at least one of these centers is itself moving. And perhaps both the Earth and Jupiter move around the Sun.

This last suspicion, which must have been frightening when first imagined, has been the basis for the "solar system" model. A big yellow ball of fire floats in space. Around it circle small balls of irregular sizes and at irregular distances. One is red, two are very large, one has rings, and one is "where we live."

Notice that we do not now imagine ourselves "at home." When we see the Earth as part of the universe, we see it from somewhere else. We first "get off" the Earth to think about it circling the Sun. As we become aware of larger "systems," nebula and galaxies, we move farther from the Earth. We look toward the Earth from somewhere we have never been. Thus, our common image of the world is dissociated from the actual experience of our home.

The distance between Sun and Earth was first imagined as bearing a decent proportion to the size of the universe. The new imagination of a "solar system" demands that this distance become trivial. Thus, the greater part of the universe in the "old world" must now fit into the part of our imagination where we once imagined only the Earth. Vast stretches open up between the "solar system" and the "stars." As we view the world from these places, the Earth gets smaller and smaller and, more importantly, farther away.

Sophisticated fantasies, such as *Star Trek* and *Star Wars*, make even the picture of an immobile Sun seem naive. We now imagine the Sun and its "moons" as rather far from the center of *its* galaxy, the Milky Way. And we do not imagine the galaxy's center to be the center of the universe, if there is such a thing. The more complex our vision, the farther we get from the Earth and the less able we are to find a place that provides order to all the parts of the universe. We are reminded of Pascal's description of the "small space I occupy and which I see swallowed up in the infinite immensity of spaces . . . "

Galileo also discovered sunspots. For our purposes, a sunspot is nothing more than a dark spot on the Sun. Galileo's telescope showed that these spots show up, last for some time, and even move across the Sun's face, assuming the Sun to be still.

These "spots" first suggest that the Sun is composed of parts that come to be and pass away. It is difficult for us to appreciate how shocking this is: The sky's source of all life, too splendid for our eyes, often thought to be a visible god, turns out to be another changing and corruptible body. Although it has supported life on Earth for some thousands of years, it must at some time grow cold, and its death entails the death of the human race, along with all our endeavors and preoccupations. Together with the Sun, all those parts of the world called "the sky" or "the heavens" are no longer everlasting beings that constitute a permanent order. They have become bodies just like those we live among, and their formation and existence should be explained just as we explain the changing bodies on the Earth.

In fact, we are encouraged by the modern imagination to look for the explanation of all bodies, in "the sky" and on the Earth, in the combination and separation of some kind of indivisible parts or "atoms." Though these atoms are too small to be seen by the eye, their supposed existence is thought to explain the mechanism of the universe. As this kind of explanation became more sophisticated, the "atom" itself was found to have its own parts, and the imagination of these parts and their movement became remarkably like the imagination of the "solar system." The principal difference in these two systems of "colored balls" is that the one system is thought to be much bigger than we can properly imagine; the other, much smaller.

I know that what modern science actually proposes is in most ways far more sophisticated than these pictures, and that contemporary science has criticized many elements in them. Nevertheless, the method of modern and contemporary science at once inspires and depends on such images. And the place of science in modern life in fact depends on our imagining the universe in this way.

Melanie Anderson

What I want to warn against is the abyss in our imagination between the "solar system" and the "atomic model." The "big balls" dwarf anything a man can relate to in his immediate experience. The "little balls" escape his immediate experience. The imagination that now dominates our common life proposes that reality consists fundamentally in these two orders. In between them, as our imagination would have it, is an illusory world—the world in which we are born, play out our lives, and come to our end. The great moments of our lives, the terrible decisions and choices, the good and evil we do and suffer, all take place in a world we now imagine as unreal and private. Thus, Pascal continues: "the small space I occupy and which I see swallowed up in the infinite immensity of spaces of which I know nothing and which know nothing of me . . . "

I am not proposing that the ancient and medieval account of how the world was put together is true. Nor am I denying that we have learned much about the world's construction from modern science. I recognize that theological truths can be contemplated in light of modern opinions about the physical universe—sometimes more perfectly than through the medieval ones. Modern intellectual culture, however, has not gathered the theological fruit that a philosophical and theological contemplation of modern evidence offers to Christian faith.

Let us begin by imagining the world by day. Though "day" is not so prominent in the universe as it seems to us, it certainly dominates all life on Earth. And even if life is not of great importance statistically throughout the universe, it is of the greatest significance to us. Now, by day, we are aware above all of the Sun, of the Earth's terrain, its trees and foliage, men, and other animals. The Earth's terrain we recognize as having tremendous heights and depths, although in places it remains even in great plains. Yet the Sun's movement, by the way it casts shadows and appears at rising and setting, makes clear that the Earth is rather even over all. Many of the Earth's crevices are filled with water, whose surface is most even.

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Closer examination, especially of oceans and seas, where the horizon is clearly round, shows that the Earth is spherical. Anyone familiar with the sea knows that a ship appears gradually on the horizon. The tip of its mast is sighted, then more and more of the mast, until its bulk appears. On board the ship, the land appears first to the sailor in the crow's nest, then to those among the sails, and finally to the crew on deck. This can only occur upon a body more or less spherical.

The modern imagination of the universe, without a center, dominated by bodily force and randomness, with its irrelevance to human life and action, offers no relation, spatial or otherwise, between men's actions in this world and consequences in another.

Still looking at water, we see that it not only falls to earth from the sky in rain but always seeks the lower place on land. There, it spreads to form a spherical surface. Yet, after soaking its surface, the water stays above the earth. Of course it enters cracks and crevices and canyons, but it only goes below the earth where some hollow lays open to it. Some wood may rise to the water's surface, but stones, metals, and other more solid bodies sink into the water. Thus, although both earth and water are heavy, earth seems heavier—not as measured on a scale, yet, in some sense, since it falls below the water. Since water is not as heavy as earth, it goes up, if pushed by earthy bodies. Throw rocks into a well, and the water rises. Overfill the deeper part of a pool or pond, and the water moves up into the more shallow part. Thus, rocks and most things made of earth tend only down, while water and other liquids that usually move down also go up in certain natural circumstances.

Let us look again at water's movement down. Perhaps, at times, it displaces wood or something similar. More often, water falls into an empty place, a dry riverbed or an empty glass. Is there really nothing there, before the water fills it? Perhaps it is difficult to be perfectly certain, but it does seem that air or gas was in these places. At times, in containers of unusual shape, some air will even be trapped by water and may bubble to its surface.

Closely related is another experience of great importance: At times, a small body of water disappears, though none of the water has been drawn away. Another clearer experience suggests an explanation: We see water falling from the sky when clouds have gathered. The clouds seem to be a part of air or gas, though apparently a part more dense, a part that turns into water. One quite naturally supposes that, just as the parts of the sky called *clouds* turn into water, the pools and puddles of water that disappear turn into air and, perhaps, even into clouds. We see a cycle of water and air turning into each other. We also see, however, that, when water becomes an air or gas, it rises; having become a liquid again, it falls. For this reason, air or gas seems light—it goes up.

Even more prominent for going up is the strangest of bodies, fire. Two things must be noted about fire. First, that it goes up. It seems to go through the air the way that air will bubble through water. Does it come to rest above the air, as air comes to rest above water? It seemed so to the ancients when they considered another characteristic of fire: its brightness. Fire is bright like the Sun, the shiny blue sky, and even the stars of the dark night sky. Thus arises the naive view that the upper sky is made of fire. It is headed there when it passes through the air.

These general conclusions from ordinary observations shaped the understanding of the basic structure of the closest parts of the universe for the ancients and medievals—a spherical earth at the center of the world, more or less surrounded by water and water surrounded by air. Water moves through air toward earth, and air moves through water upward. Above the air is fire, which moves through air to the place where it surrounds the air.

We are all aware that the bright part of the world is where the Sun is and that day is distinguished from night by the rising and setting of that Sun. Thus, everyone is aware that the Sun seems to go around the Earth once per day. Also clear is the fact that the Sun stays longer in the sky in summer and is higher—that is, for us, farther north—while, in the winter, night is longer and the Sun is lower, farther south. The implications of this will be clearer from consideration of the night sky.

Such consideration is greatly obscured by modern life; city lights, streetlights, porch lights, lamp lights, and, most of all, televisions impede our observation of the night sky. Observation of the heavens was among the most important evening activities in early civilization. I cannot provide you with this experience, although I heartily encourage you to obtain it. I can describe some of its elements.

Even the lights of our major cities cannot prevent us from knowing that there are stars in the night sky. We may never have noticed, however, that these stars rise and set once per day, always moving toward the west. Thus, the entire heaven seems to move westward in a circle around the earth. It is all too easy to neglect another fact about the night sky: The stars change throughout the year. Over the course of the year, the stars that appear each night shift, so that the same stars will appear again in the same places 12 months later. This corresponds to another annual shift: the movement of the sun toward the north and the south. The shifting of stars is "caused" by the "fact" that, apart from its daily rising and setting, the Sun moves in a circle tilted from the equator of the heavens along a path called the *ecliptic*, or the *zodiac*. This movement toward the east causes our year and determines our seasons and the lengths of our days. The Moon and all the planets, in addition to their daily movement around the Earth, travel likewise along the zodiac, but with different cycles.

All of these movements appear to be circular. The Sun, Moon, planets, and stars do not move up and down—toward the Earth or away from it, as do rocks and rain and fire. They move in circles, and this circling suggests no sign of a beginning or an end. Thus, Aristotle made two or three closely related conclusions. First, since they move so differently from earth, water, air, and fire, these heavenly bodies are not made of the

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same stuff as are the things down here but of another—a fifth—nature or element. The stars, the Sun, the Moon, and each of the planets are moving within a transparent sphere made of the same element. Second, this element and the things made of it are incorruptible. They neither come to be nor pass away; they have always been and always will be. The third of these conclusions is a kind of corollary: To move in circles is natural to these bodies. Like them, such movement has neither beginning nor end.

Note here that Christians did not think the world has always been. So they rejected this one point in Aristotle's account of the heavens. Still, it did seem reasonable to many medieval Christian thinkers that, although the heavens were created with a beginning in time, they were of such a nature that they would continue to exist forever and, if God had willed it so, they would have existed forever. Thus, they thought, together with the ancients, that the heavens were, by nature, incorruptible.

At some point, an outermost sphere was introduced to explain the bright blue sky. We only see the splendor of this sphere when the Sun lights up the spheres in between. This sphere, called the *empyrean heaven*, is utterly immobile, and, in the *Divine Comedy*, it seems to have no size. It is only the outer surface of the ninth sphere, the *primum mobile*, the first moving part of the universe. This ninth sphere was also introduced by the medievals. It is just beyond the stars. This is the sphere immediately moved by God.

Although Dante is describing a vision of souls separated from their bodies, he experiences this vision as related to parts of the corporeal world and, at several times, explains that he had a bodily vision of "airy bodies." He describes some of these visions as taking place in Hell, where the resurrected bodies will spend their eternity. The vision of Heaven is more complex, as the blessed souls all inhabit the empyrean heaven. They manifest themselves in the several celestial spheres for other reasons.

In the *Divine Comedy*, Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory, taken in relation to souls *separated* from their bodies, are not truly places. Until the general resurrection, these souls have no spatial location. Here, the word *place* can only mean some relation or order of the soul to God and to each other. Thus, Dante's use of parts of the world to represent this order is, in part, metaphor and, in part, anticipation of the last things.

The primary metaphor is taken from the parts of the universe themselves. Hell is placed in the earth, underground. Purgatory is a mountain rising out of the ocean toward the heavens. Heaven is experienced in the sky among the planetary spheres. It is not difficult to see the proportion of these places to the souls that inhabit them. As we see earth sink through water, and the heavier and more dense forms sink lower than those less dense, so the souls who preferred themselves to God move by their nature down into the earth. There they find the place within the earth that balances the weight of their sins. Souls inflamed with divine love that still need to be purged of their earthly inclinations are passing through the region of the air. The saints, who have risen above their fleshy nature and lived according to their immortal part, circle above this lower sphere of generation and corruption. There, they enjoy light and freedom of movement, an eternal freedom from the heavy burdens characteristic of this earthly life.

Why does Dante use this world, in such tremendous detail, in describing the other world? Of course, a poet must use sensible images. Even God must use metaphors and likenesses to reveal spiritual things to us, and any poet must do likewise, if he dares to take on such subjects. Dante, however, need not situate the other world so distinctly in this one. Nor does he lack the imagination to create another world.

> Notice that we do not now imagine that we are "at home." When we see the Earth as part of the universe, we are seeing it from somewhere that we have never been. Our common image of the world is dissociated from the actual experience of our home.

Dante's choice reveals a tremendous difference between the modern and the medieval mind. For Dante, the other world is near this one, and the passage from this world to the next is not difficult to imagine. This nearness is, of course, not so much spatial as moral. The moral proximity is reflected in the ease with which the other world can be seen from here. This points to the most fundamental difference: The medieval does not find the reality of the other world difficult to believe or imagine. Like Nelson Head, he is ready to find such realities in the universe. The medieval stands "for some seconds shaken." He draws "away from the curb."

The modern imagination of the universe, however, without a center, dominated by bodily force and randomness, with its irrelevance to human life and action, seems to offer no relation, spatial or otherwise, between men's actions in this world and consequences in another. If Hell does exist, we have no sense of where to imagine it. We are in great need of a work like the *Commedia* to form an imagination of the other world that fits in some way to this one.

Reconsideration of the modern imagination makes our need even more clear. For our imagination is not as remote from the other world as it first appears. Our heavens are dark and lonely. They seem a more fit setting for Hell than for eternal bliss. And when all is done, we imagine both the heavens and the earth in the same way—cold, quiet balls revolving in black, empty space. And this emptiness is at the heart of our difficulties in reading Dante. While the medieval Florentine imagines a world that God's love bathes with light and warmth, we see the world as cold and dark. Pascal, imagining "the infinite immensity of space," took fright.

And we, in this vast unthinking emptiness, cannot imagine meeting somewhere with the satisfaction of all desire. We, too, should "stand for some seconds shaken." We too should draw "away from the curb." We have begun even here to experience the great pain of loss. c

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A Southern Legacy

The Christian Sense of Place

by Fr. Alister Anderson

In all Eastern Orthodox Churches, this troparion or prayer is spoken or sung frequently in worship: "O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation."

This ancient prayer was, one might say, a "national anthem" that was offered on all public occasions in the Christian empires of Byzantium and Russia. It originally petitioned God to save the people, to grant victory in war, and to preserve the empire by virtue of the Cross of Jesus Christ. Today, this prayer is spiritualized as the "adversaries" become both the Devil and his armies and the spiritually wicked and sinful people who flaunt God's law and tempt Eastern Orthodox Christians. This prayer presents in microcosm the true nature of God, man, and the Christian sense of place. It illustrates God's love for man, man's need for God to save him from himself, and God's salvation of man by putting him in a place where he can fulfill his destiny to love and serve God by loving and serving his neighbor.

We need to recover that God-given model and blessed result of living in a community. This model existed in the antebellum American South. A study of that last Christian civilization on the North American continent offers a way to reestablish a Christian sense of place, and we should set aside the intellectual arrogance that makes some of us think that we are superior to those who went before us. Southerners lived on their land and in community, interdependent with their neighbors. They knew that their unchanging religious tradition gave meaning to life and a destiny. Their society gauges how far we have fallen away from a Christian sense of place and reveals how much our culture has surrendered to a narcissistic and hedonistic sense of self that engenders peoples' obsession for individual freedom of choice, unconstrained by any source of authority outside themselves. The insatiable demand for such choice, regardless of how it may adversely affect others, added to the increasing mobility of our society, has made us rootless and placeless.

To compare our culture with that of the antebellum South, we need to look at the theological changes that occurred in New England and the other Northern states. Those changes opened the way for the emergence of a gnostic distortion of Christianity, which inevitably spawned a secular humanism that, in turn, transformed the culture of the North and has subsequently become the state religion of the United States. The traditional conservative religious faith and practice of the Southern people wove into their society the firm faith that the One God revealed and experienced in the Holy Trinity is the Father of all Creation. They believed that God's law was revealed completely in the Holy Bible. They believed that both natural law and revealed law through Jesus Christ defined the nature and motivated the development of their culture and community. They believed that the Holy Spirit of this One Triune God welded into a unified society all of the Southern people: the planter, the businessman, the tenant farmer, the small farmer, the frontiersman, and the slave.

This unity was not politically socialist or egalitarian. It was biblical and spiritual in nature and brought into being a mutual social and charitable responsibility among the people, whatever their station in life might have been. Their biblical faith made them self-conscious and self-confident, anti-elitist but still aristocratic, with a *noblesse oblige* derived from their memory and love of chivalry. Richard Weaver, in his essay "The Older Religiousness in the South," writes that the South's attitude toward religion was a "simple acceptance of a body of belief, an innocence of protest and schism by which religion was one of the unquestioned and unquestionable supports of the general settlement under which men live."

The Christian moral and ethical values of the South stemmed primarily from Reformation Trinitarian theology. In New England and other Northern states, these values were largely moribund among the political, social, and religious leadership. Most Southerners believed, quite correctly, that the people of New England (and, generally, of the North) had rejected traditional Christianity, which they had inherited from their Pilgrim and Puritan ancestors.

From the end of the Napoleonic wars until the outbreak of the War Between the States, Europe underwent violent political and social unrest, spawned by radical new ideas about the Christian religion and the political governments of men. In the three decades before Lincoln's armies invaded and pillaged the South, a steady stream of New England intellectuals went to Europe where they studied and embraced these radical and revolutionary ideas. Such men as historian George Bancroft, classics scholar Edward Everett, eminent linguist George Tichnor, author and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson, and U.S. Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts all drank deeply from the wells of the radical social philosophers.

These elitist New England intellectuals were convinced that Southern biblical Christianity should be suppressed because it was a stumbling block to the progress of mankind. They declared that virtue and salvation were attainable through education and social reform rather than through adherence to a traditional Christian religious belief. They advocated an unrestrained freedom of choice, guaranteed by the man-made laws of the state, which would supplant the biblical laws of God.

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Many New England clergymen imbibed the ideology of the radical European theologians and philosophers who invented the "scientific" analysis of the Bible, cast aside the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and came to believe that the doctrine of the Trinity was false, that Jesus was not divine, that men and women are not miserable sinners who needed a Savior. They believed that they could save themselves through better education and a greater trust in their own reason, intuition, and feelings. Richard Weaver also writes:

> New England was settled in the early years largely by people who had been embroiled in religious feuds, which they found occasions for renewing after they had set themselves up in the New World. In New England . . . the right to criticize and even to reject the dogmas of Christianity came at length to overshadow the will to believe them . . . Such troubles arise only when egotistical and self-willed people make assent a matter of intellectual conviction . . . New England, acting out of that intellectual pride which has always characterized her people, allowed religion to become primarily a matter for analysis and debate.

There was indeed a profound difference in theology between the North and the South in antebellum America. The Northern intellectual leadership preached an heretical Social Gospel. The South held on to a robust, traditional, Trinitarian Christianity. The North experimented with a philosophy of ethical culture under the guise of religion. The South clung to an Apostolic Faith that dealt with the biblical realities of life, death, judgment, Heaven, Hell, and the sacredness of place.

Antebellum Southerners were well aware of what we today call "secular humanism." Boldly, they declared it heresy, a gnostic distortion of Christianity. It is the eclectic summation of a rootless, placeless, individualistic American experiment with utopianism, universalism, Unitarianism, Transcendentalism, and Jacobinism. Secular humanism destroys the Christian sense of place. It presupposes that a better world can be achieved without God's love, mercy, and judgment. Christians know that it matters greatly where we and our ancestors were born, baptized, received Holy Communion, married, and are buried. These events in life are not only Sacraments and sacramentals but geographic places in God's design for our lives.

Roman Catholic priest, poet, and Confederate Army chaplain Abram J. Ryan composed a poem after the War Between the States entitled "A Land Without Ruins." In the introduction to the poem, he wrote, "A land without ruins is a land without memories—a land without memories is a land without history . . . Calvaries and crucifixions take deepest hold of humanity."

The War Between the States and the North's determination to destroy the Southern homeland as well as her culture during the Reconstruction Era (which is still going on) could not completely eradicate her sense of place. The South was and remains the Bible Belt. Her religious legacy gives all of America a chance of regaining a Christian sense of place, which is the only guarantee of a stable civilization. Father Ryan's poem reflects this history and offers hope for the future.

Yes, give me the land where the ruins are spread,
And the living tread light on the hearts of the dead;
Yes, give me a land that is blest by the dust,
And bright with the deeds of the down-trodden just.
Yes, give me the land where the battle's red blast
Has flashed to the future the fame of the past;
Yes, give me the land that hath legends and lays
That tell of the memories of long vanished days;
Yes, give me a land that hath story and song!
Enshrine the strife of the right with the wrong!
Yes, give me a land with a grave in each spot,
And names in the graves that shall not be forgot;
Yes, give me the land of the wreck and the tomb;
There is grandeur in graves—there is glory in gloom;
For out of the gloom future brightness is born,
As after the night comes the sunrise of morn;
And the graves of the dead with the grass overgrown
May yet form the footstool of liberty's throne,
And each single wreck in the war-path of might,
Shall yet be a rock in the temple of right.

A Warning to Dissidents

by Leo Yankevich

Yes, pretty soon now they'll be at your door.
They've orders and a warrant after all.
It doesn't matter. You'll be on the floor,
your wife and children having watched you fall.

Just then you'll notice fallen scraps and crumbs,
the beauty of your wife's perfect pale feet,
the Celtic Crosses on your daughter's thumbs,
the food above that you will never eat.

Your thoughts will have become a crimson pond
that flows out of your gagged and bleeding head
until you find yourself afloat, beyond
the reach of billyclubs and flying lead.

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Taxation for Economic Survival

The Business Transfer Tax

by David A. Hartman

The severity of the ongoing decline of U.S. manufacturing has placed our prosperity and national security in jeopardy. A principal cause of this crisis is the federal tax code, which currently imposes multiple layers of progressive taxation on U.S. goods. The result, as many economists acknowledge, is crippling: a double taxation of savings for investment and excessive marginal rates. But there is an even greater disadvantage to U.S. manufacturing: a one-sided application of free-trade policies. The object of the various free-trade agreements crafted by our government was supposedly the mutual elimination of tariffs. Tariffs were, in fact, eliminated, but all of America's trading partners replaced them with comparably high border-adjusted value-added taxes (VAT), which give selective advantage to their industries. The result is crippling: a double taxation of savings for investment and excessive marginal rates, redoubled by the additional burden of foreign value-added taxes.

America is virtually alone in the developed world in not providing the advantage of such border-adjusted taxation to her manufacturers. At an average level of 17.7 percent for member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), these taxes are not only levied on goods imported from the United States but abated on goods exported to the United States, constructing barriers to U.S. competitiveness in manufacturing that are insurmountable, especially since, in today's open world economy, capital, technology and management are free to move anywhere that offers the best opportunities.

The United States has adopted a self-destructive trade policy, in part, because of our entirely laudable commitment to free enterprise and our rejection of mercantilism and colonialism. At least since World War II, American business and political leaders have viewed free trade as the basis for international peace and prosperity. In theory, the "invisible hand" of free markets—if capital, technology, and labor were free to seek their own competitive advantage—would disperse the means and fruits of free enterprise worldwide. To accomplish this economic miracle, protectionism in the form of quotas, red tape, and, most particularly, high tariffs would be progressively reduced and ultimately abandoned.

As the dominant economic and military power, the United States led the movement to dismantle trade barriers, both by setting the example and by supporting a New World Order of international trade regulation (GATT and WTO), economic cooperation (OECD), and customs unions (such as the European Union and NAFTA). According to the OECD, its members have reduced their average tariff rates from 40 percent at the end of World War II to 4 percent today. The United States' average import duty on goods is currently 1.7 percent.

The decline of tariffs masked a trend, which started in Europe, toward border-adjusted taxation in the form of value-added taxes. These taxes were levied principally on manufactured goods. The alleged purpose was to "level the playing field" by offsetting the expense of government welfare through taxation of spending on consumption. The VAT's were determined to be "indirect taxation," which the WTO permits to be rebated on exports and levied on imports. Led by France, who first adopted the VAT in 1968, European Common Market countries added the VAT over the next five years, although Germany and Italy were slower to reach the current VAT rates than were France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. The Asian countries have since joined the VAT parade. Today, the European Union 15 has an average standard VAT of 19 percent, and the average OECD standard VAT is 17.7 percent. During the 1990's, Mexico and Canada increased composite rates to 15 percent from 10 percent and 7 percent, respectively, and China adopted a 17 percent VAT in 1994.

The OECD's summary of its members' tax trends ("Revenue Statistics 1965-2002") reveals the truth:

> A fast growing revenue source has been general consumption taxes, especially the value added tax (VAT) which is now found in twenty-nine of the thirty OECD countries. In fact, the substantially increased importance of the value added tax has everywhere served to counteract the diminishing share of specific consumption taxes such as excises and custom duties.

The only one of the 30 OECD countries without border adjustments in her federal tax code is, of course, the United States.

As foreign governments have increased the VAT, they have also reduced effective corporate income taxes. In the United States, by contrast, the taxation of resident corporations' foreign income is causing the flight of corporations' headquarters to countries that exempt taxation of overseas income.

The time has come to replace the current corporate income tax with a border-adjusted and territorial tax code that really does level the economic playing field. Any effective alternative should also meet the requirements of supply-side tax reform. In other words, such a tax code should be neutral in taxing savings *versus* taxing consumption; it should reduce marginal rates and assess the tax burden equitably.

There are four principal candidates for supply-side tax reform. Only two of them, unfortunately, meet the criteria of consumption taxation and border adjustability. The most popular plan with conservatives is probably the Hall-Rabuska flat tax, which is a single-rate tax on wages and an equal-rate

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tax on origin-based corporate cash flow that exempts returns to capital at the personal level. As a "direct tax," however, the flat tax could not be made border-adjusted according to WTO standards and, therefore, could offer no comparable border-adjusted tax relief for U.S. manufacturers. Although it is promoted as a simple tax, political reality would subject the flat tax to a continuing redefinition of income—and, potentially, to a progressive rate schedule. Since such a plan would inevitably be stigmatized as tax relief for the rich at the expense of the majority of wage-earning taxpayers, its prospects are very dim.

Another less popular plan is the Consumed Income Tax (CIT), which taxes all income once and only at the personal level, after investment savings have been exempted. This, too, qualifies as a "direct tax," making it ineligible for border adjustment. Although the CIT has the advantage of taxing all income the same and of encouraging investment, it is also susceptible to political tinkering that could reintroduce progressive taxation and higher marginal rates.

Closer to the mark is the Fair Tax, which is a flat-rate retail-sales tax (RST) that replaces all federal taxation, including social-insurance taxes, and gives rebates on the tax on the equivalent of poverty-level income. It is an indirect consumption tax, and, as such, qualifies by WTO standards for border adjustment.

The preferable alternative is the Business Transfer Tax (BTT), a subtraction method value-added tax based on the difference between revenues and purchased goods and services for all enterprises and employers. The BTT would exempt fixed investment and exports, but it would apply to imports, and it would credit an employer for social-insurance taxes paid. Both the RST and the BTT would offer rebates that could be used to remit taxes on "necessities."

The RST and the BTT are both consumption taxes, but there are significant differences because of the different tax bases that underlie the plans. Theoretically, the RST has as its base all personal consumption expenditures; experience with state retail sales taxes, however, shows that it is very difficult politically to impose taxes directly on "necessities." A large portion of consumption—housing, healthcare, food, legal fees, and even hair care—are exempt from state retail taxes, and the same humanitarian zeal might afflict the RST. Even without exempting necessities, the RST would have a smaller potential base. It would require a higher rate than the BTT, which would provide an incentive for tax evasion. Were an RST to replace *all* federal taxation (as the Fair Tax proposes), then it would either have a smaller base than the proposed BTT, or it would have to introduce a companion measure that would tax payroll and the consumption expenditures of government and not-for-profits.

This leaves the Business Transfer Tax as the most viable proposal on the table. What are its advantages? Apart from the fact that it can be made border adjustable, the BTT would establish a tax base that includes all commerce and employers, eventually reaching even employment and purchases in the government sector and employment in the ballooning not-for-profit sector. Although aimed at consumption, the BTT, by collecting from employers rather than from consumers, would offer little justification for allowing exemption, but it would also provide equitable rebates to offset spending on necessities. Such rebates would serve as replacement for exemptions, deductions, and credits, and, if the BTT were adopted as a single flat tax, all taxation of income could be eliminated.

How should a Business Transfer Tax be implemented on a revenue-neutral basis, replacing current taxation in order of priority? First, the corporate income tax would be replaced by a 5.5-percent BTT. Next, the BTT would be raised to 10 percent, enabling the personal income tax to be flattened to a 14-percent single rate. Finally, the entire tax code (apart from personal FICA taxes) would be replaced by a 20-percent BTT. If the socialists insisted on maintaining a "progressive" code, a somewhat lower BTT rate could be adopted, supplemented by a modest upper-income tax. This is not recommended, but this is not a perfect world.

Following this plan would mean an equitable, neutral, transparent, and politically feasible supply-side and border-adjusted reform of the federal tax code. It would dramatically reduce our perennial trade deficits on manufactured goods and provide optimal growth for *all* sectors of the U.S. economy. It would level the playing field for U.S. corporations in general, and manufacturing in particular, and for U.S. blue-collar workers, whose earnings have been increasingly depressed over the past three decades. It would mean a return to a more equitable sharing in the growth and prosperity of the U.S. economy—not only for those in manufacturing but for all sectors of the U.S. economy.

Our representatives in Congress should consider the U.S. taxpayers' definition of "fair taxation." A *Readers' Digest* poll addressed the question "What is the highest rate of taxes Americans should pay regardless of income level?" A statistically sound sample of Americans answered: 25 percent. The BTT meets this criterion.

Some politicians and experts continue to deny that there is a manufacturing crisis and to oppose a U.S. value-added based tax. This obfuscation of the real reasons for declining blue-collar incomes serves the interests only of the few who currently profit abroad at the expense of all other Americans' prospects for the future. c

The second sentence of the second paragraph of Mr. Hartman's article "What Manufacturing Crisis?" (November 2004) should read: "From June 1998 to January 2004, 3.5 million workers lost their jobs—a decline of 19.7 percent." The editors regret the error.

Vengeance Is Mine, Says the Lord, 1943

by Leo Yankevich

in memory of the German and Russian soldiers buried together in mass graves during the battle of Stalingrad

If but the sun had burned less brightly
upon the faces of the dead
He saw heaped high that winter day
inside a pit dug in a field,
one could say who was good, who bad,
who was a sinner, who a saint,
but those He saw were saved in death
and share one grave beneath His land.

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The Wand of Youth

A Story

by Anthony Bukoski

When Francis Majewski escorts my sister to our back porch, he bows to her like a Polish nobleman, then hobbles home on walking crutches with hard leather cuffs that circle his forearms. Lesczyk Iwanowski, Gerald Bluebird, and I, Antek, stare at him, scratch our heads, call him "the Noble Pole." He's older than us.

If we're playing basketball, he'll lean his crutches against the garage, plant himself at the free-throw line in the alley, and yell stupid things like "Hustle him! Hustle him!" When he's not facing the basket, he can't shoot. Because he can't turn without crutches, slapping the ball from him is easy, despite his strong arms.

He has weak legs, though. They are thin as a person's wrists and won't bend. He'd never let you see them. One time, Pete Dziedzic and some bullies kidnapped him. They paid a guy a year older to buy them beer in the county, where it's legal to drink at eighteen. They forced three cans of Northern down Francis. With their own beers gone, they headed to Allouez Sauna in the neighborhood across the Left-Handed River from the East End where we live. Francis was embarrassed they'd see his legs if he came into the sauna. If he didn't, they threatened to make him stumble home, drunk, on his crutches. It was nine below zero. Leaving their clothes in the changing room, the guys sat in the steam, laughing about Francis out in the car. Just as they got the sauna hotter than even Pete Dziedzic could stand it, in with his crutches walked the Noble Pole—in long underwear! No one in high school wears long underwear, which got them laughing. Five seconds later, the union suit was soaked, and Francis was passed out, but at least no one had seen his legs. The heat and the red underwear sweated the beer right out of him, Dziedzic said. Knowing the Noble Pole with his high moral standards, they will be the last beers he'll have in life.

My sister's other sad friend attends Szkoła Wojciecha, St. Adalbert's Grade School, with me. I don't like Teeny Juncewicz, who wears thick glasses that make it appear as though she knows just how the teenage years of a Polish Catholic should be lived. She always talks about the "wand of youth." She tells us we control something valuable that one day will be lost. "The wand of youth, it's so precious," she says, waving her hands as though she holds this wand. While Teeny scowls at everyone her age, when the nuns call tennis shoes "tennis slippers" or boxing gloves "killer mittens," she laughs her approval. Whatever *they* say is great. I think the wand of youth has passed her by. Teeny is an old woman of fourteen who laughs at idiotic things and cries over Anna and the map of Poland.

Nowadays in the East End, neighbor ladies collect money for polio research, donation cans stand on counters of businesses, and my sister prays she will be healed. When Anna returns from the special school she attends with Francis, who probably wears long johns on hot days, she starts in praying, so that her voice puts me to sleep. For centuries, the Black Madonna of Częstochowa, a blessed icon, has guarded Polish people, Polish homes, Polish armies, but Anna's prayers will go unheeded because this family is cursed: Dad is stuck in a job on the packing floor at the flour mill, my sister has polio, and Ma can't do anything when we're home but pray or listen to Chopin on the phonograph.

Thankfully, I have two normal friends—Gerald Bluebird, the lone Indian in the Polish East End neighborhood, and Lesczyk Iwanowski, who's come from the old country. They take my mind off of how people treat Anna special and how she has two bizarre friends.

"Why'd the nuns keep you?" Mother asks when I return from helping the Sisters pack away schoolbooks for the summer.

"That's how the Polish nuns are. They got nothing better to do," I tell her, saluting as I tear back out the door. With Anna upstairs in bed, Ma is distracted as she always is lately, but I'm on Memorial Day business and can't worry about it. My dad and I are men with a mission.

"Sorry I'm late," I tell him when he looks like he's expecting me to screw something up again. "It was the Sisters at school that kept me working."

"Wreath's in the trunk," he says, driving our beat-up Chevrolet down the alley, then down Fifth Street.

Much land south of our house is flat and wet. You can't build on it. After a few miles of Superior, Wisconsin, wetlands, you come to the South End, where a water tower with the words TWIN PORTS CREAMERY written on it rises over the neighborhood. Further south, we pass farm fields, a couple more houses. Beyond the drive-in theater, Dad parks behind a line of cars on the side of the highway. Through air that smells like lilacs, we head for the cemetery, when someone yells to us in a Polish accent.

Mr. Ham is leaning on his cane. People call him "Good Ham, *Dobrze Szynka*," because of his last name. If he corners you, he'll tell you about his "phantom pains," which he pronounces "phan*th*om pains." He also has "galloping pains." To help the soreness in his legs, he wears his wife's support hose. Today, he has on funny-looking gloves. Unnatural on the hands of a retired laborer, they are tight, dressy, tan-colored lady's gloves.

"Why you wearing them?" I ask.

"Arthur-itis control," he says. "Helps the hands."

Because of the pain, it's hard for him to walk, too.

Though the priest is asking everyone to bow in remem-

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brance of the war dead, we follow Mr. Ham, president of the Polish Club, the Kosciuszko Club. Holding the wreath Dad's given him, "Good Ham" limps up to the Moose and Elks. Successful men, they wear white shirts, ties. Mr. Ham has on a blue work shirt; Dad, a clean T-shirt. Compared to ours, other organizations have beautiful, expensive wreaths. Looking at them distracts me. How do I concentrate on praying amid the color? The United Commercial Travelers and the Eagles Club have red roses on their wreaths, the Woodmen of the World, white carnations and spruce boughs. I have never seen such splendor. The line of wreaths goes back half a block.

Our wreath is built of coat hangers. They form a crooked A. Leaves and vines hang from the three-foot-tall wreath. It looks like no one at the Club bothered to dust them. Four sad, fake daisies peek from the plastic greenery. What resembles poison ivy dangles in back. To read it, you have to straighten out a wrinkled streamer:

THADDEUS KOSCIUSZKO CLUB

"People are going to laugh at you. That wreath's disheartened," Ma had said earlier. Maybe because he's embarrassed about the wreath, George Ham breaks out a miniature of peppermint schnapps. Still in eighth grade, I'm not allowed to taste it. Dad does.

"Royal Order of Cooties, Pup Tent #1. Come forward. Present your wreath," says a VFW official. "Woodmen of the World. March forward next." After ten more groups, he calls us. "Polish Club. Present your wreath."

When he says it, something comes over me. I realize our war dead—my Uncle Walt in Korea; my Uncle Stasiu, Helen's husband, in World War II—are as important as anyone's. As Dad, Mr. Ham, and I march forward, my heart sinks with sorrow for the lost. Fixing the wire stand in the earth, we salute the wreath, then help Dobrze Szynka, a World War I vet, turn around to march back through the crowd.

When a bugler plays "Taps," nobody's supposed to talk, but in front of everyone, Dobrze Szynka, slurring his words, starts saying, "We have a future with the Polish youths involved. Kosciuszko has the same number of beats as 'Kiss-Me-like-Ya-Used-to.'" Breaking open another miniature, he slips a dollar into my shirt pocket. At the moment he sips from the bottle, he loses his balance. People are laughing. Dad's laughing. Mr. Ham is complaining to people on the left and right about galloping pains, phanthom pains, and stiffness in the joints caused by months of living in trenches during the First World War.

"Polish people are patriotic," Dad is saying. "Do you know more Polish fellas from the U.S. served in World War II than from any other what's called 'et'nic group'? Save the dollar Mr. Ham gave you. Get your sister a nice present tomorrow. She's in the house all a-time."

"Thank you, boys," Mr. Ham says to us. Stumbling to pick up the daisies he knocked from the wreath when we caught him, he hands them to me for safekeeping.

As we follow him to the Warsaw Tavern, Dad says, "You've done the club proud, Antek." He tells me of Polish East Enders that fought in wars—Duke Novazinski, "Tag" Novack, Walt Simzek, Tony Stromko, Joe Bukoski, on and on goes the list all the way to Dobrze Szynka at the Meuse-Argonne, which we studied in school. For him to have been in World War I, Dobrze Szynka must be sixty. Dad has a beer with him in the tavern, where someone plays "The White Cliffs of Dover" on the accordion.

At home, Mother has lilacs in the rooms to honor these and other war heroes. I hear her telling someone that Anna's resting, then hear her call from the hallway, "Teeny and Francis!"

"OK, Ma," Anna is saying.

When Francis, who thinks my sister loves him, realizes she isn't coming downstairs, his face sinks.

"We'll be back later," Teeny says, as if threatening me.

After lunch, when everyone has to be quiet so Dad can take a nap before work, I get bored around the house. In the East End business district four blocks away, businesses are closed except for the taverns. Peering through the window of the Warsaw, I see Mr. Ham where we left him at the far end of the bar drinking a bowl of beer in his lady's gloves. Standing at attention, I salute him before wandering back to the neighbors', the Iwanowskis', to ask whether I can look through the magazines Lesczyk's Ma stores in the shed. To keep out the wind and rain, they have tacked old newspapers to the wall. The Iwanowskis have been "resettled" from Poland to Louisiana under the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, then resettled to Superior.

Scott P. Richert

"I *geev* you money you sweep and t'row t'ings out of shed, Antek," Mrs. Iwanowski says. Lesczyk and her other sons are off in Minnesota working on a farm for the summer.

Finding a *CORONET*, when I am through sweeping the shed, I sit on the back-porch stoop of our house to look through the magazine. I am a nickel richer for my payment. If I call up to Anna to tell her how wealthy I've become, she will hear me. I am thinking how last week Ma picked wild roses from the overgrown field Iwanowskis own between their house and Malmquists'. The fragrance clung to her hands, her dress. Placing a bowl of water with a rose in it on the mantelpiece, she gave another to Anna. When Anna proceeded toward the Black Madonna's picture, Ma held her arm the way Dad and I held Dobrze Szynka's at the cemetery. The Polish Madonna has long scars on her cheek where Swedish invaders had slashed the face on a portrait at Jasna Góra. The Madonna holds the Christ Child on Her lap. His two fingers are raised in blessing as though He holds the wand of youth. With Anna whispering prayers, I knew the Madonna and Child would someday heal her, regardless of what Dad has said about Anna's chances.

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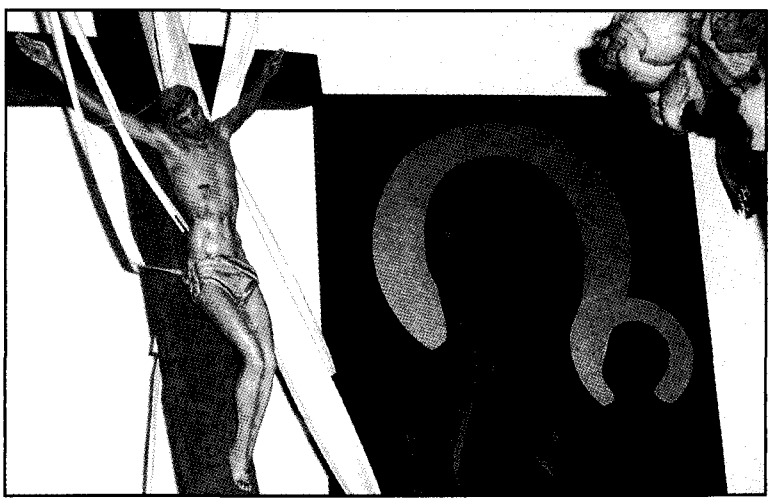
Now I visit her on the last day of May. Propped against a pillow, she sits on a blue quilt. A breeze pushes the window shade inward, sunlight brightening the bed, then pulls the shade back. Either Ma or Aunt Helen has undone her braids. Light brown hair falls to her shoulders. Looking as though she's going someplace she isn't, she sits alone in a dress with a white collar.

"You know what I did, Anna?"

"What?"

"Represented the Polish Club at the cemetery. Bought you something. Dad told me to." As I place the daisies on her bed, I say, "This is today's first present. I didn't buy these plastic flowers. They're a memento for you. They fell off of something."

Breeze moving the shade, I go in my room for the second present. When I return, Anna, surprised by what I'm bringing, says, "Weren't stores closed? Where'd you buy a magazine?"



Scott P. Richert

"I got it. Dad told me to, but I would've anyway," I tell her. "I bought you the *CORONET* with a dollar from Mr. Ham, a nickel from Pani Iwanowski. What are you doing?" I ask her.

She's twirling the daisies in her hands.

"You didn't buy it. Let me rest. Why should I talk to you?"

"I suppose the magazine's from outer space. You're confused from being upstairs so much."

"If that's true that you bought a magazine, then tell me I'm pretty."

"I will," I say. But I'm soon stuck. "If I say it, you'll tell me I'm a liar. If I don't, you'll never believe you're pretty or going to be healthy."

"You're so easy to see through, Antek," she says, laughing. "Give your friends a proud salute for me. It's hard being upstairs and believing you."

It's too bad if she doesn't trust me, I think when I leave. It's not my fault she gives up on things all the time.

Outside, I fiddle with the strings holding the clematis vine to the trellis below Anna's window. "What are you doing?" Ma asks.

"Nothing."

We can hear the music from Anna's radio coming through her window screen upstairs.

When I go next door, Mrs. Iwanowski says I can keep the magazine she didn't know I'd taken from her. Looking above a story title that reads "The Future Looks Better for Disabled Veterans," I see, printed in white letters on the blue cover, a three-year-old date.

"Oh no!" I say when I realize my mistake. Thinking Anna knows I lied, I foolishly salute Mrs. Iwanowski, telling her Mr. Ham has galloping pains.

"What you are talking about, 'galloping pains,' Antek?" she says.

"I don't know. I worked all morning. I brought Anna this magazine from your shed. I told her I bought it. You didn't mind, did you?" I'm talking so fast I don't know what I'm saying.

Drying her hands on her apron, Mrs. Iwanowski says, "'*Czem chata bogata tem rada*—What the home has, we are happy to share.'"

"I don't mean to be impolite, but I ain't cut out to be Polish. There's no use speaking it to me again. 'Man is the maker of his destiny,' the nuns say."

"Antek, Antek," she says, smiling as though she's traveled a very long distance from the old country—maybe even from Częstochowa—and can rest awhile. Seeing her shake her head, I know I've embarrassed myself in front of her, too. Unsure of what to do, I salute Pani Iwanowski the way I'd saluted the wreath at the cemetery, then take off through the field to Aunt Helen's, who lost her husband, Uncle Stanley, at Iwo Jima.

With Helen at work, no one is home. I keep thinking how Anna, a year older than me, is very serious. With little to look forward to in life, she at least expects kindness from her brother. I never worry whether she'll walk without crutches. I have too much else to think of. Brother and sister. If I say the words in Polish, I am afraid they will haunt me.

The sun has almost sunk on a holiday. I have been on Aunt Helen's porch steps all evening. I wish Gerald and Lesczyk were here, but Gerald has gone to the reservation with his parents to celebrate Memorial Day. Even Francis wouldn't be bad to have around. I'd apologize for what the guys did to him at the sauna. I'd do everything different if Francis was here. The Noble Pole could teach me to be Polish.

When I come in, Ma says, "Anna wrote you a note. I was going through the newspapers on the table. Her note might have gotten buried."

When I find it under the *Naród Polski*, I see Anna has written "Thou Shalt Not Lie."

"What's she talking about, Antek?"

"I said something to her earlier."

Putting the note with the money I will give Anna on the table before the Black Madonna, then praying to St. Adalbert, I think of how our family attends a church named after him and of how, last week, I graduated from the school named after him, Szkoła Wojciecha. The Patron Saint of Poland would be ashamed of me.

"I don't feel so hot, Ma. I might need a new saint."

She's listening to a Paderewski record on the phonograph. He is a composer and Polish statesman. Except for the dim light from Grandmother's old lamp in one corner, the room is dark with the beauty of spring. I bend to kiss Mother. "Here is a Polish saying for you, Antek. '*Kto prędko daje, dwa razy daje*—He who gives freely gives twice.'"

Upstairs, everything is quiet except the Paderewski music. After awhile, I hear the hum of engines at the flour mill where Dad, a military veteran, works from three to eleven. Then I hear a tug on the bay signal an ore freighter—but in the next

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room, no sound, just stillness.

Once in bed, I hear my sister. I think she is saying, "What kind of brother are you?"

"Anna," I tell her, ashamed to go in there, "if it helps you, I will listen to you say it all night." Over and over as she is whispering, "What kind of brother are you?" then saying it in Polish, I am whispering, "With this wand of youth, I will make it up to you."

At eleven-thirty, when Dad comes home from the mill, I am whispering it. The little I've done for Anna is as quiet as whispers promising nothing. As I listen to her, I am certain St. Adalbert will hear my prayers to him. There is so much to request with prayers and a wand of youth—a better job for Dad, a less worrisome life for Mother, a new wreath for the Polish Club. But mostly my prayers concern my sister on the night May becomes June and when the next Feast of Our Lord is Corpus Christi.

At midnight, I hear Dad saying he works hard. "Anna," I hear him in the next room. "I'm proud of your Antek for how he helped Dobrze Szynka keep standing. I'm proud of you for keeping your chin up. You don't give in; I won't give in no matter what," he says.

When he comes into my room, he asks, "Are you up, Antek?" From inhaling so much flour dust at work, he has a hard time catching his breath after climbing the stairs. Plus, he's had a couple of beers in the kitchen.

"I can't sleep."

"I'm proud of you, believe it or not," he says. "I keep thinking how 'From a good nest come good children.' Don't let nobody tell you it ain't important to be Polish. And remember what Dobrze Szynka said, 'Kosciuszko has the same number of beats as 'Kiss-Me-like-You-Used-to.'"

"I've decided I'm joining the Club when I'm older. Can we sneak Gerald in, though he's Indian? I'll still join if we can't. I'll be president."

"*Bardzo dobrze*," he says laughing, then touching the top of my head with his rough hands.

By now, Mother, whom I haven't paid much attention to but should have, is coming upstairs to their room across the hall. Halfway up, I hear her say, "Oh dear," and turn around. "If I put on another record, Chopin this time, the phonograph will shut off automatically when it's through playing, won't it, Janusz?" she calls to my dad.

"Yes," he says. Since my sister got polio, Mother needs reassurance about everything.

With the windows open, lilacs inside and out, the house smells like heaven tonight. You can hear the Chopin record my mother has started to play, though not as clearly as if you were with her in the moonlit living room downstairs where she has gone again to pray to the Madonna, kissing the Child in the Madonna's arms over and over until Dad comes to rescue her.

"Come upstairs, Agnes," I hear Dad saying to her.

"I love Chopin. I'm not too tired yet."

"Come. The Madonna will be here to kiss tomorrow, just as Poland will be. Chopin and Paderewski as well."

"Her Child with Her? I want Her Child to be with Her."

"Yes," says my father. "Her Child with Her. Let the phonograph shut off now by itself, and you can listen for awhile in the moonlight upstairs."

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Mexico Comes of Age

by Allan Wall

"It doesn't matter to me if Mexicans make fools of each other; what I will not tolerate is that Mexicans do it."

—Pancho Villa

Opening Mexico: The Making of a Democracy
by Julia Preston and Samuel Dillon
New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux; 594 pp., $30.00

◆

The world remembers the 2000 U.S. presidential election, with its hanging chads, overvotes, undervotes, and esoteric attempts to "discern the intent" of the voter. Irregularities people thought did not and could not happen in the United States were happening and coming into public view. Imagine my embarrassment, as an American living in Mexico since 1991. Only four months earlier, on July 2, 2000, Mexico had held her presidential election. In contrast to ours, the Mexican election went smoothly and resulted in a peaceful change of regime, after 71 years of one-party rule. It was the first peaceful regime change in Mexican history.

The American media were—and still are—largely focused on Vicente Fox, the winner of the 2000 election, who took office five months after being elected. The real story, however, goes much deeper than the election of one candidate.

The saga is told in *Opening Mexico: The Making of a Democracy*, by Julia Preston and Samuel Dillon, two Pulitzer Prize-winning reporters for the *New York Times*. Their book is certainly worth reading, both for seasoned Mexico-watchers and those who know little of our southern neighbor. Preston and Dillon have written what is probably the best summation in English of what happened—a decades-long struggle for democracy, orchestrated by no single leader or movement but resulting from a combination of factors. The authors have lived in Mexico (both speak and read Spanish fluently) and have conducted extensive research into modern Mexican political developments, interviewing an impressive number of the principal personalities involved in Mexican politics.

Melanie Anderson

When I consider the transformation of Mexico, I think of my Mexican mother-in-law, Bibi Orduña. She labored for years as an activist in the Partido Acción National, which eventually became a vehicle for the successful Vicente Fox campaign. During elections, Bibi served as an observer in the polling station. That was an important task, especially as the government of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional is so adept at pulling dirty tricks on election day. On one occasion, PRI activists ordered Bibi to vacate the premises so they could get down to the serious business of switching ballot boxes, or some such shenanigans, without witnesses. Bibi, however, is a determined lady and refused to budge. So they gave up. She, and thousands of activists like her—not the party bosses—deserve the real credit for the opening up of Mexico's political system, as Preston and Dillon make clear.

The PRI held power for 71 years, utilizing a combination of patronage, electoral hijinks, and, as a last resort, violence. Skillfully, it structured Mexican society so that it held all the levers of temporal power. Votes were purchased with a combination of patronage and outright bribery. When that was not enough, dirty tricks were employed. Under the PRI, vote-stealing became an art form. Entire boxes of pre-marked ballots were exchanged for the real ones, the lights went out when it was time to count ballots, party activists voted multiple times in various polling sites, and so forth. Imagine a U.S. political party incorporating the Democrats and the Republicans, the AFL-CIO, the oil companies, Wall Street, the most influential intellectuals, and just about anybody else who is anybody, and you have an idea of what the government was like in Mexico for most of the 20th century.

The voluntary organization of civil society outside of the PRI was discouraged, the Catholic Church was marginalized and excluded from power, and education was in the hands of the ruling party. Labor was "organized"—by the PRI. Though violence was only employed as a last resort, that was certainly no comfort to its victims. In 1968, hundreds of student protestors were gunned down

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in the Tlatelolco Plaza on the eve of the Mexico City Olympics. In 1971, another student massacre occurred. The Mexican government conducted a dirty war against leftist protestors from the 60's to the 80's that is only now coming to light, and, from time to time, journalists were eliminated. Yet violence was definitely not the weapon of preference of the PRI government, which preferred co-option of potential dissidents and handouts to calm the proletariat.

Mexico's economy was statist and protectionist, yet, at the grassroots, the free market was never snuffed out. The PRI's economic program was marvelously flexible, capable of moving toward or away from state intervention at will. The PRI system never crossed the line into totalitarianism; that simply was not necessary. (After all, this was the pre-internet era, and the Mexican government held a monopoly on newsprint.) Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa dubbed the PRI "the perfect dictatorship": It maintained all the forms of a democratic state, complete with a constitution, regular elections, an executive, a congress, and a judiciary. In reality, however, the executive was the only branch that mattered; the Mexican Congress served only as a rubber stamp for the president, as did the courts. State governors were even appointed by the president. Certainly, the PRI provided stability, and the depoliticization of the military prevented military coups. Reelection was forfended by term limits. The Mexican president was limited to one six-year term, after which he was free to depart with his loot, having chosen his successor in the *dedazo* ritual. The successor dutifully stood in the regularly scheduled sham election, and the cycle started all over again.

Part of the genius of the system lay in its mechanisms for controlling factional strife within the PRI. Personal ambition and factionalism were channeled into the service of the party by the distribution of attractive positions and other rewards to the ambitious, in return for loyalty. The PRI system outlasted the Soviet Union, the Nazis, and various socialist governments. Apart from its "revolutionary nationalism," the party really did not have a clear ideology and sometimes would change policy or even reverse itself. The important thing was always to hold power. As the years went by, however, fissures began to appear in the massive one-party structure. And, after decades of economic growth, the system, beginning to stagnate, failed to deliver the goods.

Opening Mexico leads the reader through the history of the past several decades to demonstrate how Mexico was gradually opened up. The Tlatelolco massacre of 1968 showed the terror that the system could wreak when pushed to the wall. Although the government quickly sought to cover the atrocity over, too many people had been affected to keep it entirely under wraps.

The failed presidency of José López Portillo (1976-1982) was another mark against the credibility of the PRI. López Portillo, recently passed away, now faces God's justice. As far as his earthly performance as president of Mexico, it would be almost comical if not so damaging to the life of an entire nation. At the beginning of his term, Mexico being awash in oil money, López Portillo proclaimed that his task was to "administer abundance." The announcement was followed by massive government spending (and its attendant corruption), then by the oil crash in 1981. In 1982, near the end of his term, a desperate López Portillo nationalized Mexico's banks and forced the conversion of bank accounts in dollars to pesos at below-market prices. The result, of course, was that Mexico's economy was in the deep freeze for the next few years.

The 1985 earthquakes in Mexico City demonstrated the PRI's utter helplessness in dealing with crisis. Preston and Dillon deserve credit for casting light on the government's response and on how the political situation exacerbated the national tragedy. Approximately half of the buildings that collapsed in 1985 had been constructed by the Mexican government. (In contrast, centuries-old Spanish colonial structures were barely affected.) At first, Mexican president Miguel de la Madrid refused foreign help. Then the government attempted to bulldoze the ruins even before searching for survivors! A newly activated citizen movement delayed the bulldozing until the rubble could be searched. Some survivors were found, including eight newborn babies in a maternity ward, who would have perished in the rubble under the bulldozers. The tasteless banality of the PRI system was also displayed on this occasion. Following the earthquakes, the authorities of a government housing complex put up a mural boasting that, in this housing facility, there were "ONLY 472 DEAD."

During the PRI's waning years, more open media allowed people to see the extent of the party's corruption. Gen. Gutierrez Rebollo was chosen as the nation's drug czar and was removed only nine weeks later when his own partnership with the Juárez cartel came to light. Then there were the antics and tasteless ostentation of corrupt plutocrat Raúl Salinas, brother of President Carlos Salinas, who was jailed at the beginning of the Zedillo administration. The corruption of these and other members of the PRI constellation are presented in vivid detail by the authors.

Slowly but surely, the PRI system was cracking, and citizen movements of one form or another were grasping power. At no time, however, did widespread violence or revolution erupt. Both the government and the opposition would step back before plunging into the abyss. In 1988, when millions of Mexicans were enraged by the national election results, leftist opposition leader Cuauhtemoc Cardenas refused to ignite massive civil disobedience, although he surely could have done so. Failures were balanced out by successes. In 1989, an opposition candidate finally became a state governor, and, in 1997, the PRI lost its majority in the Cámera de Diputados, the lower house of the Mexican Congress.

Opening Mexico describes the last two PRI presidencies—those of Carlos Salinas (1988-1994) and Ernesto Zedillo (1994-2000)—and recounts the peso crash at the beginning of the Zedillo administration. The authors attribute the crash (which effectively reduced everybody's salary, including mine, by half) to the poorly handled transition between the administrations of Salinas and Zedillo. However, Zedillo, the last PRI president, certainly deserves credit for his immediate recognition of Fox's opposition victory and his avid cooperation in the transition of power. Had he listened to hotheads in his own party, things could have turned out quite differently.

Preston and Dillon rightly assert that Mexico's democratization owes little to the direct influence of the United States. And that should give pause to those who believe that we can easily democratize Middle Eastern nations that differ from the United States even more than does Mexico, which is, at least, a Western nation.

There were some American influenc-

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es. For example, PAN activists in Chihuahua state read and utilized an American campaign book to learn how to manage their own campaigns. The real reasons for Mexico's transformation, however, were social, political, and economic. It was driven by the Mexican people.

Certainly, American campaign advisors were discreetly engaged by Mexican politicians to advise their campaigns. In the 2000 presidential campaign, PRI candidate Francisco Labastida hired James Carville as a campaign advisor. (Carville foisted upon Labastida a campaign slogan that translated very poorly into Spanish, but it was utilized anyway.) Vicente Fox, not to be outdone, retained the services of Dick Morris. When all was said and done, though, it is doubtful that these gringo hired guns had much to do with the outcome of the election.

Jimmy Carter tried to put his finger into the pie as well, serving as an election observer during the 2000 election. At first, he complained to the Mexican government of alleged irregularities but was rebuffed. After it was clear that the election results favored Fox by a wide margin and that there was no evidence of widespread cheating, Carter changed his tune. (The former U.S. president actually asked to appear on Mexican television to announce the election results. Needless to say, this went over like a lead balloon.)

Today, Mexico is a healthy and rather rambunctious democracy, with an authentic division of powers. Gone is the one-party state, replaced by three principal parties, none of which is capable of dominating the political scene. The Congress is independent of the presidency, and even the Supreme Court has, of late, ruled against the executive branch. Freedom of the press has advanced by leaps and bounds since the old days, when the government held a monopoly on newsprint and bought off the media (or used skullduggery against independent journalists). At one time, criticizing the president was strictly prohibited; now, no public figure is off limits. One nightly news program features puppet shows lampooning the president and other politicians.

I do not mean to suggest that everything in Mexican democracy would satisfy an American constitutional conservative, as there is little opposition to big government. There is a centralization *versus* federalism debate, but it revolves around how much the federal government is doling out to the states, not around how much real power the latter can exercise. Few people would pay much attention to the technical distinction between a democracy and a republic; in fact, the terms are used interchangeably. Leaders of all of the parties exercise an inordinate amount of power over their party candidates. (In Mexico's system of proportional representation, a large percentage of the members of Congress are chosen directly by party leaders rather than by the electorate.) In any case, Mexico is a much more centralized state than the United States; therefore, we have to see the country's transformation in a Mexican context. Historically, government in Mexico has alternated between the extremes of authoritarianism and anarchy. The development of a peaceful balance of power is thus quite noteworthy.

We should not expect, nor demand, that Mexico (or any other country) adopt wholesale our system of governance. On the other hand, there are elements of Mexico's system that we might consider emulating in our country. The Mexican voter-registration system is far superior to our slipshod "motor voter" regime. In Mexico, every registered voter has a voter ID card provided by the government. This card bears the voter's photograph, fingerprint, and a holographic image to prevent counterfeiting. Every Mexican polling station has a book containing a photograph of each voter in the precinct, which is available to the poll workers and observers from various parties. If doubt exists as to a voter's identity, the poll workers can simply look up his name and see if the photo matches. Upon voting, the voter's thumb is smudged with ink to prevent him from voting at another polling station. This effective system played no small part in helping to ensure a smooth election in 2000.

Opening Mexico is not the definitive treatment of Mexican history and society in the 20th century. Many social trends go unmentioned or appear only as they relate to political developments. Completely absent from the book is any treatment of Mexico's racial stratification, with its mostly white elite and darker-skinned lower classes—a system that, in any case, remains unchanged by political democratization. Also lacking is a consideration of what Mexico's democratization means for U.S.-Mexican relations. I would contend that Mexico's democratization is good for the United States in the long term, while not necessarily indicating better relations in the short run. This observation particularly applies to the subject of immigration, Mexico's number-one foreign-policy initiative.

All the major political actors—left, right, and center—are in agreement on that issue. All Mexican political parties and all major media organs actively promote increased Mexican emigration to the United States, meddling in U.S. internal affairs, and the retention of the loyalties of Mexican-Americans. There is quite simply no room to negotiate on this issue. Thus, the "migratory accord" promoted by politicians on both sides of the border amounts to a *de facto* Mexican veto of U.S. immigration policy. The best thing we can do for Mexico is to tighten up our own immigration policy, thereby forcing her government to put Mexico's own economic house in order. On other issues, room for cooperation exists under a rubric of mutual interest. We seem to have moved beyond constant bickering over the drug trade, which is just as well, since that mega-industry is not going to decrease as long as there is such a substantial market for illegal drugs in the United States.

At the end of *Opening Mexico,* the authors express a rather dismal view of the accomplishments of President Vicente Fox in the four years since his election. There is no doubt in my mind that the Fox candidacy was the best option for Mexico in 2000. As president, however, Fox has failed to show the leadership skills necessary to accomplish substantive reforms. The fault is not all his. Now that the imperial presidency no longer exists, the Mexican chief executive must share power with the Mexican Congress. Neither side has really taken the bull by the horns to hammer out the necessary reforms required for Mexico's future and the good of Mexico's people. That may require a whole new team, a new president and congress after the next election, in 2006.

One way or another, Mexico's one-party state is definitely a thing of the past. The nation finally has a multiparty division of power. What must follow is the construction of a successful economy, which can provide employment for Mexico's citizens within Mexico. Perhaps another book will be written to tell the story of how that dream was made reality. C

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The Left-Hand Path

by Samuel Francis

The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern
by Alex Owen
Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 355 pp., $30.00

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Last May, the *New Republic* carried an informative article about how contemporary exponents of Cabala, a school of Jewish mysticism dating from the Middle Ages (if not earlier), have shaped the minds (such as they are) of such celebrities as Mick Jagger, Britney Spears, Demi Moore, and Madonna. The Material Girl herself was quoted from an interview she had given the year before as telling *Dateline* NBC that she was "a Kabbala-ist" and expounding on the analogies between Cabala and punk rock. Both, she maintained, are ways of "thinking outside the box."

Alex Owen's new monograph on the rise of occultism in late-19th-century Britain does not focus on Cabala, though the cabalistic tradition plays quite a large part in what she is talking about. Her main interest is in how "occultism" reflects and has helped shape modern culture and what both "occultism" and "modern culture" mean, but that is not necessarily the interest that most readers will take in her well-researched but sometimes-murky book.

The sudden obsession of a number of perfectly ordinary middle-class Victorians with the most esoteric and bizarre lore of ancient and Renaissance magic and with the reality of what most people would call supernatural phenomena could be dismissed as simply an aberration; the truth is, however, that occultism in the late Victorian era, both in Great Britain and on the Continent, attracted an awful lot of people, and by no means were all of them ordinary. The main organizational vehicle for the occult resurgence in Great Britain was a society known as the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, founded in London in 1888 by three gentlemen who had steeped themselves in the study and practice of magic. They soon attracted dozens of others, including the young W.B. Yeats; a woman named Florence Farr, who was later the mistress of George Bernard Shaw (and probably of Yeats, too) and who became a famous actress and also a major influence on the British theater; Constance Wilde, wife of the infamous Oscar (who had enough sense to stay away from the group); a well-known author of popular children's books who wrote under the pseudonym E. Nesbit but was really Edith Bland, wife of the Fabian Society's Hubert Bland; Algernon Blackwood and Arthur Machen, two major British fantasy writers of the era; and a number of others. The Golden Dawn nearly recruited Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who pursued outside its ranks his own lifelong interest in spiritualism, psychic research, and even the existence of fairies. Moreover, one of the main founders of the group and its official head was an odd character named S.L. MacGregor Mathers, who married the sister of the French philosopher of vitalism, Henri Bergson. Bergson himself had no interest in the occult, but, as Owen shows, his philosophy paralleled in several respects the worldview the occultists peddled.

Some scientists also showed an interest in such matters. Alfred Russel Wallace, who formulated the theory of evolution by natural selection around the same time Charles Darwin did, was a firm believer in spiritualism, a movement that antedated occultism as Owen defines it and was essentially a modern form of necromancy, the art and science of raising the spirits of the dead. George John Romanes, a major physiologist of the period, was also a student of spiritualism. The Society for Psychic Research was founded just six years before the Golden Dawn by Henry Sidgwick ("one of the foremost philosophers of the nineteenth century," as Owen calls him) and included astronomer Balfour Stewart, the mathematician and logician Charles Dodgson (better known as "Lewis Carroll," author of *Alice in Wonderland*), folklorist Andrew Lang, future prime minister Arthur Balfour, and others. William Crookes, a major chemist who discovered the element thallium and received a knighthood (and a member of the Golden Dawn), was also a student of spiritualism or "psychic research" for many years until renouncing it, as were Francis Galton, founder of eugenics, discoverer of fingerprints, and a pioneer of statistics, and distinguished physicist Sir Oliver Lodge, "a leader of the new spiritualist revival." Interest and belief in "the occult" was thus far more than a marginal phenomenon, and those who shared it amounted to far more than a fringe movement of social misfits and intellectual cripples. Occultism constituted a major, if not exactly mainstream, influence on the era.

Owen argues that interest in the occult was in part the result of the scientific challenge to traditional religious beliefs that became popularly known and accepted in the course of the 19th century, as well as a reaction to that challenge. Essentially, many Victorians wanted and needed a belief in something more than the dry materialism and rationalism that science offered them, the "disenchantment of the world" that Max Weber saw in the rise of Protestantism, rationalism, science, and capitalism. The occult gave them such a vision. If science and "progress" purported to have discredited orthodox religion, then ancient mysteries, suppressed heresies, strange phenomena, and forbidden practices seemed to point up (or down) an alternative road to truth.

Both Lodge and Doyle had personal reasons for wanting to believe in the supernatural and dabbling in spiritualist experiments, since both had lost sons in World War I, and Doyle, a brother as well; indeed, their involvement in spiritualism intensified after the war. But interest in psychic research, as distinguished from the more religious movement of spiritualism, was, in many respects, a perfectly normal branch of science that ultimately failed to establish itself because what it sought to study did not really exist. Although there are clear and obvious connections between communication with the dead and the practice of outright magic, there is also a major difference. The Golden Dawn and similar groups were not really interested in science, although, as Owen argues, the occultists typically couched their arguments and claims in scientific terms and frameworks. What the occultists were interested in was power—not political power precisely (though some played with that, too) but cosmic power.

Candidates for membership in the Golden Dawn were carefully screened, but, within the order, there was a "Second Order" hidden from the general membership, "a secret elite within a secret elite." "Magic as it was understood in the Second Order," writes Owen,

> was based on the belief that an Adept can use a series of revered and ancient techniques in conjunction with a knowledge of correspondences in order to converse with

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> those worlds beyond our own and gain control over the invisible forces of the universe,

and "the great goal of the magical enterprise" was "the reconciliation of the human and divine." In other words, what magic ultimately seeks to do is to transform man—or at least some men—into God.

Candidates for the Second Order were required to take an oath obliging them to devote themselves to the achievement of the "Great Work," to "purify and exalt my Spiritual Nature so that with the Divine Aid I may at length attain to be more than human." What that meant, says Owen, is that magic in the Second Order "was centrally involved in bringing the magician into direct communication with God and thus (although possibly only momentarily) to a state of almost supernatural semi-divinity."

Similarly, alchemy, also revived in the course of the occult renaissance, was directed toward "the 'spiritual' rising of the individual to a divine state." While the vulgar understanding of alchemy is that it seeks to transmute lead into gold, the "transmutation" is more accurately understood as a metaphor for turning the dull metal of human nature into divinity. The Cabala itself entertained the same project, and the First Order of the Golden Dawn ("the Golden Dawn in the Outer," as it was called) steeped itself primarily in cabalistic lore. Only in the Second Order, once the initiates had been thoroughly indoctrinated in the pantheistic mysticism that the Cabala conveys, was this arcane gibberish applied to the "Great Work" of creating "the Perfect Man."

Sooner or later (usually sooner) this kind of stuff involves sex. Unlike the Freemasons, with whom the founders of the Golden Dawn were closely connected, the order admitted women, and Owen suggests that, although several of its leaders claimed to observe chastity, "sex magic" may have been secretly practiced by some. One member who certainly did so was the man who became by far the most notorious practitioner of occultism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Aleister Crowley, who was also a member of the Golden Dawn and whose scandalous conduct helped break the organization up.

Owen offers a detailed account of an outré ritual in the Algerian desert that Crowley carried out in 1909 with his protégé Victor Neuburg, another occultist, with whom Crowley maintained a lurid sadomasochistic homosexual relationship. The purpose of the ritual was to invoke the demon "Choronzon" and to "cross the Abyss"—that is, to make himself something rather close to God, or what Crowley conceived to be God. Owen, unlike some who tend to whitewash Crowley, leaves little doubt as to who or what that conception was. "Crowley," she writes,

> seems to have made an early identification with Satan and a further connection between Satan and sexuality. This was ultimately to be worked out in the Magick [as Crowley insisted on spelling the term] of his adult years.

Owen is less concerned with the exposure and documentation of what the British occultists did and believed than with using Victorian occultism to reformulate our understanding of modernity and its relationship to the secular; since she analyzes this mainly in the convoluted jargon of the Frankfurt School, it is not always very clear what she is talking about. As interesting as that effort might be, or might have been, in the absence of her argot, what is more intriguing is what she suggests about the impact of late-19th-century occultism on the mind of the ensuing century.

Toward the beginning of her book, she remarks that most of the occultists she is writing about and the organizations they founded have long been forgotten. That is true, but the reason is not that they were unimportant; rather, they tended to dissolve and vanish as their teachings entered the mental bloodstream of the 20th century. She shows, for example, that a good many of the occultists and their adherents were involved in the Fabian Society and similar socialist projects.

> This combination of socialism and heterodox spirituality was equally evident in organizations like the "mystical" Theosophical Society and the largely socialist Fellowship of the New Life, the precursor of the Fabian Society. . . . It was considered perfectly feasible at the turn of the century to adhere to a communitarian vision and socialist principles while espousing a belief in an unseen spirit world, a cosmic mind, and eastern religion, and many did. This potent mix remained a feature of both progressive thought and "mysticism" into the 1900s.

One of the most influential figures was Annie Besant, who took over the Theosophical Society—the other major occultist group of the era—after the death of its founder, Madame Helena Blavatsky, and who was also an activist in the Fabians and later in the Indian nationalist movement. Besant had made her reputation by leading a famous strike of London match girls in 1887 with the help of journalist W.T. Stead, editor of the radical *Pall Mall Gazette*; Stead himself, an intimate for some years of Cecil Rhodes and "an ardent spiritualist," later founded his own spiritualist magazine, *Borderland*, to explore life after death. Alfred Richard Orage was another Fabian who was a member of the Theosophical Society and edited the *New Age*, "one of the most avant-garde journals of the early twentieth century."

Both Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung (as well as William James) were deeply interested in "psychic research"; Freud once remarked that "If I had my life to live over again I should devote myself to psychical research rather than to psychoanalysis." (Given that the latter is probably even more of a dead end than the former, he might have done better.) Jung, like Crowley, had an experience with a "demon" that manifested itself to him as the result of a magical ritual; he wrote his doctoral dissertation on the psychology of occult phenomena and "immersed himself in a study of Gnosticism and Hermeticism that owed a great deal to the work of the Theosophist G.R.S. Mead," Madame Blavatsky's former private secretary. Owen calls attention to the connections between psychoanalysis and occultism.

> In Britain after the war an interest in the occult and psychoanalysis often went hand in hand, and some of those who had been involved with social issues and occultism over a decade earlier were among the earliest Freudian enthusiasts. . . . Theosophists (and other occultists like Aleister Crowley) tended to think that Freud had "discovered" nothing that had not been known for centuries by occultists and teachers in the East, but this interest in the relationship between spirituality and

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consciousness nevertheless created a revitalized climate of esoteric inquiry.

Figures such as Freud and Jung, Bergson and James, as well as the Fabians and others, were often deeply influenced by, or even immersed in, a worldview that was essentially drawn from the Gnostic, cabalistic, and Hermetic traditions the occultists regurgitated. Thanks to their influence, what is essentially an occultist worldview came to permeate much of the Western mind in the last century. Why should it be surprising that so many people today spout it still, and that so many of its claims and promises have become the commonly, though unconsciously, held assumptions of modern life?

Whittaker Chambers writes in the Preface to *Witness* that communism was not an invention of the 20th century but, in fact, is "man's second oldest faith. Its promise was whispered in the first days of the Creation under the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil: 'ye shall be as gods.'" It is precisely the same promise that magic—the alchemy, the Cabala, and the demon-raising of the Golden Dawn and Aleister Crowley—tried to fulfill. It is no accident that so many Fabians were connected to it; their vision of a planned and closely regulated utopia ruled by an elite armed with its own secret knowledge is largely a secularized version of what the magicians of the Golden Dawn fantasized about. Orthodox Christians will find the vision of man-made-god blasphemous and abhorrent, as well as profoundly evil in itself, regardless of how many fancy rituals and soupy formulas dress it up. Aside from its theological import, however, the vision also supposes that human beings can ignore, transcend, and violate the laws of nature (including those that govern their own nature) and build their New Jerusalem as they fancy. The New Jerusalem that the Golden Dawn, the Theosophical Society, and similar cults tried to construct with their fake magic failed, as did that of their secularized heirs in Moscow, Beijing, and Washington. No doubt Madonna and her outside-the-box "Kabbalaistic" buddies think they will do better in the future.

Samuel Francis is a nationally syndicated columnist and political editor of Chronicles.

Daffodils for Wordsworth

by Patrick Walsh

Philip Larkin: Collected Poems
edited by Anthony Thwaite
New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux; 218 pp., $14.00

◆

The name Philip Larkin (1922-1985) is a wonderfully poetic one, conjuring an image of a lover of horses on a carefree adventure. Such, however, is far from the temperament of this 20th-century poet, whose poetry is more suggestive of some horse in a Dickens novel, harnessed to an industrial wheel and moving forever round in some dreary factory. Larkin believes that there is "no elsewhere that underwrites our existence." His friend Kingsley Amis described him as "one who found the universe a bleak and hostile place and recognized very clearly the disagreeable realities of human life, above all the dreadful effects of time on all we have and are."

Larkin's sustained melodious song is of the endless passage of time and coming death. "Aubade," which means a morning song, first appeared in the *Times Literary Supplement* during Advent 1977. It is an advent of death, not birth:

> I work all day, and get half-drunk at night.
> Waking at four to soundless dark, I stare.
> In time the curtain-edges will grow light:
> Till then I see what's really always there:
> Unresting death, a whole day nearer now,
> Making all thought impossible but how
> And where and when I shall myself die.

Czeslaw Milosz appreciated the poetic skill and craftsmanship of Larkin's five-stanza poem but protested that

> the poem leaves me not only dissatisfied but indignant and I wonder why myself. Perhaps we forget too easily the centuries-old mutual hostility between reason, science and science-inspired philosophy on the one hand and poetry on the other? Perhaps the author of the poem went over to the side of the adversary and his ratiocination strikes me as a betrayal? For death in the poem is endowed with the supreme authority of Law and universal necessity, while man is reduced to nothing, to a bundle of perceptions, or even less, to an interchangeable statistical unit.

Larkin was strongly influenced by Thomas Hardy and writes with his hard clarity. Hardy's poetry, however, is more open to the possibility of grace working through nature. Even Hardy hearing a "Darkling Thrush" holds open the possibility of "Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew / And I was unaware." Ecstatic notes of optimism are not to be found in Larkin. Yet, in his Introduction to *The Oxford Book of Twentieth-Century English Verse*, Larkin says that he wanted "to bring together poems that will give pleasure to their readers." This theme recurs in his essays. Larkin believed that poetry readers should "enjoy what they read," wanting to know, "if not, what the point is of carrying on."

I do not take much pleasure in the content of Larkin's poems, but I do delight in his use of language and in a poetry that scans and rhymes and is coherent. These qualities are altogether rare today, but Larkin is a master of traditional verse: He suffers in perfect iambs. Larkin rightly took pleasure in the form of his poems. How he found pleasure in their burden, I have trouble fathoming.

I used to think Larkin was simply having a lark in his poems. Starting to laugh, however, I found that I could manage only a cynical smirk. He says children are mean and seems to think that love is just selfishness. Sadly, he never moves beyond this stance. Larkin's is the antithesis of passion, for passion means "to let," "to allow," and it entails suffering. This pained suffering is part of a higher nature of which we are capable. Larkin closes himself to this mystery, thinking it "wiser to keep away."

In "Love," he writes that

> The difficult part of love
> Is being selfish enough,
> Is having the blind persistence
> To upset an existence
> Just for your own sake
> What cheek it must take.

Larkin never married. Of his parents'

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union (which was not an unhappy one), he writes, "the marriage left me with two convictions: that human beings should not live together, and that children should be taken from their parents at an early age." I find much of his poetry to be a kind of self-willed negativity and a closing off of oneself to the world. Larkin once said that "deprivation was for him what daffodils were for Wordsworth."

Trying to put Larkin in perspective, I picked up *The Soul of London* by Ford Maddox Ford. The business of the artist, says Ford, "is to render the actual" and to be "passionately alive to all aspects of life" and open to it. For, in the modern world, "facts so innumerably beset us that the gatherer of facts is of little value." The artist must make out the pattern of the bewildering carpet that modern life is. Larkin, while painting the pattern of the carpet, never looks beyond a factual world and so closes himself off in darkness.

Hardy once said that we should admit that we are in the dark, but that light may follow. Larkin seems to think the darkness has virtue in itself. In a review of "The Poetry of William Barnes," he writes: "if his work has a deficiency, it is in lacking Hardy's bitter and ironical despair. Barnes is almost too gentle, too submissive and forgiving." One might ask, "Too submissive, gentle, and forgiving" to whom?

I prefer Larkin's early poems, where a little light is allowed to shine, as in "Coming":

> On longer evenings,
> Light chill and yellow,
> Bathes the serene
> Forehead of houses.
> A thrush sings,
> Laurel surrounded
> In the deep bare garden,
> Its fresh peeled voice
> Astonishing the brickwork.
> It will be spring soon
> It will be spring soon-
> And I whose childhood
> Is a forgotten boredom,
> Feel like a child
> Who comes on a scene
> Of adult reconciling,
> And can understand nothing
> But the usual laughter
> And starts to be happy.

Though Larkin sees no order in the universe, he maintains an ordered integrity in his poetry and is a formidable defender of tradition. He loathes academic poets and their parlor games with prose that they call poetry. That is the curious thing about Larkin. This quotation from a *Paris Review* interview is uplifting:

> It seems to me undeniable that up to this century literature used language in the way we all use it, painting represented what anyone with normal vision sees, and music was an affair of nice noises rather than nasty ones. The innovation of "modernism" in the arts consisted of doing the opposite. I don't know why, I'm not a historian. You have to distinguish between things that seemed odd when they were new, but are now quite familiar, such as Ibsen and Wagner, and things that seemed crazy when they were new and seem crazy now like Finnegan's Wake and Picasso.

This new edition reflects Larkin's own ordering of the poems and also contains his previously uncollected work. The reader can see how great a master he is of traditional poetic form and how fully he paints the emptiness of modernity.

Patrick J. Walsh writes from Quincy, Massachusetts.

radical \`rad-i-kəl\ *adj.*: "going to the root."

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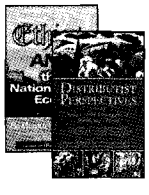

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by Scott P. Richert

Becoming Native to This Place

This fall has been especially beautiful here in Rockford. There is some truth, however, in the old adage that "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder," so I am not certain whether a year's worth of rain and sun and cold nights with a moderately late first frost have all come together to provide particularly brilliant colors or whether the eyes of this beholder, somewhat less distracted than in recent years and moving more slowly, propelled by feet rather than by internal-combustion engine, have simply been more attentive and receptive. In any case, it has been a fall to remember, in every sense of that phrase.

Fall has always been my favorite season, and not just because of the physical beauty. It is the season that, it seems to me, most strongly evokes a sense of place. The beauty of spring can be enjoyed anywhere, and, indeed, the enjoyment is often enhanced by a measure of novelty—new growth seems especially new when you are seeing it for the first time. Summer—even (or, perhaps, especially) a summer spent at home—is a time of restlessness. Winter is a time of home and hearth and family, a season shuttered against the world outside—a bourgeois season, certainly; but, to a great extent, the delights of home can be shared even by those who have little connection to the broader place in which they find themselves.

The beauty of fall is enhanced by familiarity. When I was growing up in Michigan, we always went "up north" to see the colors, but year after year we traveled back to the same locations, and it was a comfort to note how little things had changed from fall to fall. And we always stopped at the same roadside stands on the way home, to buy potatoes and onions in 50-pound sacks to stock the root cellar for the coming cold.

Familiarity is inextricable from memory—an obvious point, but one that bears repeating, for man, without memory, is something less than human. And memory is an aspect of imagination, which even in our day of passive entertainment—television, films, computer screens—is an active faculty. It is stimulated by sights and sounds and smells, but, in the end, our memories are largely a matter of will, a point Merle Haggard understood better than most modern philosophers: *I guess everything does change / except what we choose to recall . . .*

As our fall stops at roadside stands suggest, men are creatures of habit—another old adage, and one that seems to have fallen on hard times. In a world of constant upheaval, in which even "conservatives" brag about their dedication to "progress," we instinctively think of habit in a pejorative sense. Yes, there are good habits and bad habits, but shorn of the adjective, *habit* usually for us means the latter. "Creatures of habit" are unthinking, unfeeling, blindly pursuing lives by rote, mumbling the prayers they learned at their mother's knee while fumbling through their beads. *Habit*, however, shares the same ultimate root (the Latin *habere*, to have, to hold) as *inhabit* and *habitation*—words that really mean nothing if separated from a particular place. J.R.R. Tolkien, in inventing his hobbits, may well have meant to suggest a combination of "human" and "rabbit" (as their long ears and furry feet would seem to indicate), but it is likely no coincidence that the word also brings to mind *habit*, for the hobbits are the ultimate creatures of habit—and, thus, of the Shire, of place.

Modern men spend much of their lives trying to break out of the patterns of everyday life, to discard their habits, and not only the bad ones—indeed, they tend to despise the good ones more than they do the bad. They want to make new memories, have a series of once-in-a-lifetime experiences—experiences that may have been shared with a few close friends or family members, but which aren't the shared experiences of a particular community traveling together through time to eternity in a particular place.

Growing up in a small town where everyone impressed upon me the importance of going somewhere (else) and doing something (more important), I grew impatient with my grandfather, who would tell the same stories about the same people and the same places over and over again. Today, when no one tells stories any longer, I realize how lucky I was that he chose to cultivate his own memory—and mine—through repetition, because those places, when I return to them, are still familiar to me, wrapped up in my memory with the sound of his voice. I only wish that my children, whom he never knew (he died a few months before my marriage), could sit at his feet and learn their history as well.

His stories will never be recorded in books, and yet they are more truly history than most of what is published under that title. For history is memory, and once the lines of memory are disrupted, the people who have gone before us, and even the buildings and places that still exist around us, become little more than data. A church can make way for a tunnel for a new jail, a school building can become an abortuary, cemeteries can lie unvisited and their occupants unmourned, neighborhoods can vanish and the city of which they were once a part can expand into nothingness, an insignificant quadrant of an artificial region dominated by four rivers.

God in His mercy, however, has given us this season, with all of its sights and sounds and smells, to stimulate our memory, to call us home, to give us the opportunity to reflect on the place in which He has placed us and to remember those who have gone before: people like my grandfather and Rockford radio icon Chris Bowman, who, whatever their faults, were people of place and of living memory, ties to a past that doesn't have to die—indeed, that we shouldn't allow to die, if we wish to remain men and not become mere insignificant data ourselves.

And so, as the days grow shorter and we prepare for the coming winter, let us not only call to mind but ask God to help us live the words of the ancient prayer: *Eternal memory. Eternal memory. Grant, O Lord, to your servant blessed repose and eternal memory.* ©

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Letter From Canada

by Mark Wegierski

The Forgotten White Ethnics

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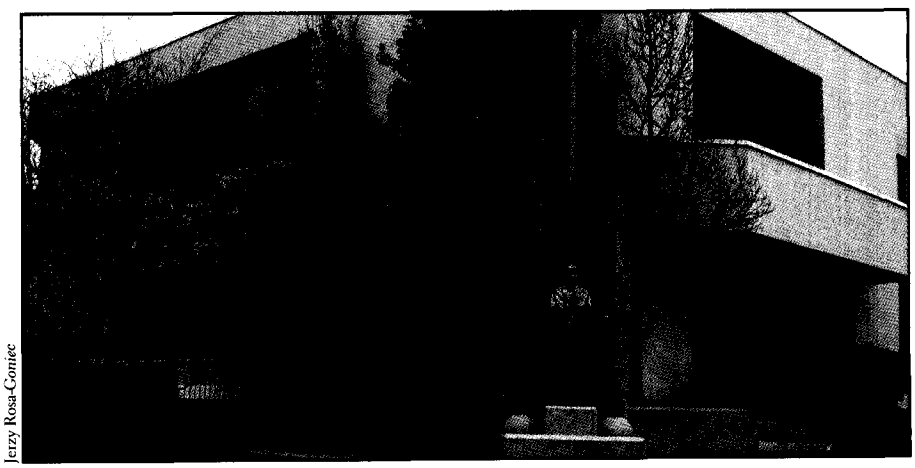
I recently returned to Toronto from a long visit to Poland, a trip on a Polish LOT Airlines jet that took only nine-and-a-half hours but would have taken months in an earlier age. In general, Toronto represents one extreme of modern development, to which Poland is a happy opposite. Nevertheless, there is a considerable Polish presence here—the neighborhood centered around Roncesvalles Avenue, which lies to the east of High Park in western Toronto.

Roncesvalles Avenue was named after the gorge where Charlemagne's warriors had, according to legend, stood bravely against the Muslims of Spain (the basis of the epic *Song of Roland*). Although the center of the Polish community in the greater Toronto area has gradually shifted westward to Mississauga, where the Blessed Maximilian Kolbe Roman Catholic parish and the John Paul II Cultural Center are located, many Poles remain in the Roncesvalles area.

Standing at the foot of Roncesvalles Avenue, you can look southward to Lake Ontario and the huge Gardiner Expressway. From above the lake, you can barely make out the monument to Sir Casimir Gzowski—probably Canada's most illustrious Pole—by the shores of Lake Ontario. At the foot of Roncesvalles, there is a comparatively small monument commemorating the Katyn Massacre. From April to May 1940, over 26,000 Polish military officers and state officials who were being held in Soviet custody were executed on Stalin's orders at various sites, most prominently the Katyn Forest. For decades, the Soviets tried to pin the blame for the massacre on Hitler, and, even today, the Russians are not forthright in conceding that this was an act of genocide. The British Foreign Office only officially recognized Soviet culpability in 1990.

The Katyn Massacre was part of a broader campaign of extirpating Poles carried out by Stalin in the part of Poland that he had obtained under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Beginning in late 1939, mass deportations of Poles to Siberia and other remote regions of the Soviet Union were conducted with brutal alacrity. Polish families were given under an hour to get ready, shoved into cattle cars, and transported into an arctic wilderness. Many died during the two- or three-week rail passage. In the camps, the old and the very young quickly died. It is said that no person over 50 survived.

After Hitler attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941, Stalin allowed some of the surviving Poles to make their way southward to Iran and the Middle East, where the Polish army was forming under the leadership of Wladyslaw Anders. Some of the Polish exiles went as far afield as India and Africa. Many of the immigrants who eventually came to Canada—including the soldiers who had fought under Anders in the Polish Second Corps in Italy—had been Siberian deportees.



Jerzy Rosa-*Goniec*

Pope John Paul II stands in front of the St. Casimir's-St. Stanislaus Credit Union.

Further up Roncesvalles is St. Casimir's Roman Catholic Church, one of the main Polish parishes since World War II. Opposite the side street where the church sits is a public school that had, for many years, a Polish-Canadian principal, Jesse Flis. I fondly remember a Polish-language dramatic poetry and prose recital contest in that building, in which I won first prize. This so-called *recytacja* is a virtually uniquely Polish subgenre. The selections are almost always from the patriotic poetry of the grand masters of Polish literature—Mickiewicz, Slowacki, Norwid—or from more modern works of poets such as Krzysztof Kamil Baczynski, the tragic hero of the Warsaw Uprising of 1944.

Walking further north, you come to the elegant new building of the St. Casimir's-St. Stanislaus Parish Credit Union—one of the largest parochial credit unions in the world, with hundreds of millions of dollars in capital and branches across Ontario. In front of the credit union stands a larger-than-life statue of Pope John Paul II, portraying him as he was many years ago, a much-younger man.

Opposite the credit union are the offices of *Gazeta*, one of the largest Polish-language Canadian newspapers. Others include *Zwiazkowiec* (the *Alliancer*), *Glos Polski* (*Polish Voice*), *Nowy Kurier* (*New Courier*), and *Goniec* (the *Messenger*).

There are many Polish delicatessens, meat shops, and bakeries and a few Polish restaurants, travel agencies, bookstores, drugstores, and gift shops along the street.

Walking still further north, you come across the modest building of the Canadian-Polish Congress, a large refurbished house. The 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Canadian-Polish Congress, the community's main umbrella organization, was celebrated in September of this year.

Further up, Roncesvalles Avenue becomes Dundas Street, which then reaches Bloor Street (an east-west thoroughfare). At the southeast corner of Bloor and Dundas, there is a large high school.

I attended the *akademie* there, where we celebrated Polish national days such as the Third of May, commemorating the Polish Constitution of 1791, which gave hope to Poles before the dark period of the Partitions (1795-1918), when Poland fell under the occupation of three foreign

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empires—czarist Russia, Prussia/Germany, and the Habsburg Empire. The Constitution of 1791 was greatly admired by Edmund Burke for its good sense and moderation. Another national day is November 11, the date when Poland regained her independence in 1918, which coincides with the Canadian Remembrance Day, the last day of World War I. It is little known in the West that Poland had to fight a series of wars in the aftermath of World War I, especially against Bolshevik Russia, to secure her borders.

As the Canadian-born offspring of postwar Polish immigrants, I am a rare bird in my community, having retained most of my heritage, including language. There have been several waves of Polish immigrants to Canada, from at least four distinctly different Polish societies. The Golgotha of World War II—in which over five million Christian Poles perished—has been no less central to Polish identity than the holocaust has been for Jews. Poles heroically participated in the war against Nazi Germany in virtually every theater of conflict. The Poles' reward was their betrayal by the Western Allies—incorporation into Stalin's Soviet Empire and the displacement of their frontiers westward, with a 20 percent net loss of territory.

The postwar wave of Polish immigration to Canada consisted mostly of Polish soldiers who had fought beside the Allies and who were both unable and unwilling to return to a Sovietized Poland. Some came to Canada directly; others moved to Canada after settling in Britain. Those Polish soldiers who came directly were, as the price of their admission, required to work for two full years on remote farms.

As things improved, many ex-soldiers went to Poland to marry, especially after the 1956 post-Stalinist thaw. Their children make up one of the largest demographic sectors of the community. Sadly, few of them have maintained their Polish heritage.

The situation of Polish-Canadians—and other white ethnic groups such as Ukrainian-, Italian-, Portuguese-, and Croatian-Canadians—points to a larger dilemma: How are people who are often "Old World" in their social and cultural outlooks to be assimilated into the prevailing liberal order when, despite an official policy of "ethnic cultural preservation," such assimilation means the annihilation of their cultural identity?

This situation splinters the community into a small number of activist diehards, who carry the torch of identity, and the largely assimilated, mostly apathetic masses. These masses still identify with Roman Catholicism, however. For the majority of Polish-Canadians, their religion is their one main institutional link to their community, *via* their ethnic parishes. As Poland today becomes increasingly North Americanized, a culture that is over a thousand years old yields to the realm of "McWorld," "Coca-colonization," MTV, CNN, and stupefying reality TV shows.

Indeed, the North American future for Polish-Canadians appears increasingly problematic, and, considering the substantial (though underappreciated by most Canadians) contributions they have made to Canadian society, this should be an issue of broader public concern. The achievements of Polish professionals—especially architects, engineers, technicians, and research scientists—in postwar Canada, have been remarkable and far out of proportion to their numbers. Not infrequently, the highly developed Polish sense of honor has actually put the Polish-Canadian community at a disadvantage. Their abiding loyalty to the Liberal Party has certainly not been rewarded or even especially noticed. Stanley Haidasz and Jesse Flis, the two prominent Polish-Canadian Liberal MP's, retired years ago. After Flis's retirement, a non-Pole parachuted into Toronto's Parkdale-High Park area, as part of Chrétien's tendentious promotion of female candidates.

These white ethnics have reached a virtual vanishing point as a matter of positive interest and concern for Canadian governments, media, and large corporations today. When was the last time Polish-Canadian and Polish issues were significantly discussed in the Canadian media? To what extent do the federal, provincial, and municipal governments' disbursements of multiculturalism funds reflect the actual proportion of white ethnics in the Canadian population? Are not such white ethnics—who can count on neither the established networks of English- and French-Canadian elites nor "designated group" or "accredited minority" status—operating at a significant disadvantage in Canada today?

Born in Toronto of Polish immigrant parents, Mark Wegierski is fluent in Polish and has written for Canadian, American, Polish, British, and German publications.

Letter From Poland

by Greg Kaza

A Pilgrimage to Jasna Góra

◆

Three Polish nuns, wearing traditional robes and habits, stand in a circle, studying their train schedule. Little sleep and the absence of coffee on the night train from Berlin contribute to my slow reasoning. "Can you direct me to the platform for Częstochowa?" I inquire. The eldest nun points to a platform, and then to her watch. They, too, are on pilgrimage to the shrine at Jasna Góra (Shining Mountain). A believer might conclude that Providence allowed a lost pilgrim to cross their path. Today, however, most would say that it was coincidence, good fortune, or luck.

I have just returned from a trip to Berlin, where I was reminded that the conservative movement has its own shrines and relics commemorating the former Soviet Union's collapse. These include the Ministerium fur Statessicherheit (the ex-headquarters of the Stasi, the East German secret police); the last section of the Berlin Wall on the Bernauer Strasse; and the shuttered embassy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, one block off the Unter den Linden, all in the former German Democratic Republic. A relic—Lenin's visage—is still visible on the latter's exterior. Another, Lenin's death mask, can be seen on a desk in ex-Stasi chief Erich Mielke's office, along with a portrait of the late *chekist* Felix Dzerzhinsky. While these are not on the scale of the secular shrine in Moscow where the ultimate Soviet relic—Lenin's embalmed corpse—remains on public display 80 years after his death, these secular curiosities of East and West share one characteristic: Christianity is not a central theme. A pilgrim will have an easier time finding a Lenin medallion near these shrines than one commemorating a saint. Certainly, there are a few reminders of the Marxist-Leninist persecution of Christians, such as Berlin's rebuilt Protestant Chapel of Reconciliation. The chapel, near the infamous "death zone" (the Wall), features a superb Last Supper woodcarving defaced (save for Judas Iscariot's face) by communists.

The conflict between Marxism and the Church founded by Jesus Christ gripped

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Central and Eastern Europe for most of the 20th century. Yet the drama is presented, in the secular East and West, as a struggle between economic systems or political regimes, not between God and mammon. Washington does not remind the world of the crucial role the Christian Faith played in Marxism's collapse, because it is a secular regime. Conventional conservative wisdom in the United States attributes the Soviet Union's collapse to the Reagan military buildup, the Soviet economy's internal economic contradictions, or a combination of both factors. Yet ignoring traditional Christianity's resilience against social systems that seek to conquer does not change history. The role that Christian religious faith played in Marxism's collapse, and Christianity's resistance to militant Islam in Europe, are highly relevant, even to a secular regime where conflict is measured in election cycles, not centuries. One conflict, from Marx's key early writings to the Soviet Union's collapse, was concluded in less than two centuries. The other, dating to the Battle of Tours (October 10, A.D. 732) is in its second millennium. History suggests that secular systems based on such abstractions as "the materialist forces of history," "the market," and "global democracy" are at a disadvantage in long struggles with aggressive religious systems.

The Marian shrine at Częstochowa, Poland, about 450 kilometers southeast of Berlin, is *Christian*, not secular, and it provides insights into both conflicts. Traveling there by train, you clearly see Poland's Catholic heritage—large churches, not Golden Arches. You can also see her Marxist past. The industrial city of Katowice was briefly renamed Stalinogród in the mid-1950's. There is Nowa Huta, Stalin's model industrial city built to rebuke Krakow, Poland's cultural center. Nowa Huta was the flashpoint of a two-decade struggle between the Church and authorities over a church for workers. The communist government issued a building permit in 1958 but withdrew it four years later. Karol Wojtyla, Krakow's auxiliary bishop and later her cardinal, persisted with other priests in seeking a permit. Workers erected crosses that were torn down by authorities. Wojtyla and other priests held Mass in a field. The communists finally relented, and the Ark Church was completed in 1977. Ironically, Stalin's model city was one of the key centers of Solidarity, the Soviet bloc's first independent trade union. The other was Gdansk, the Baltic port.

The fortress sanctuary at Jasna Góra, where the icon of Our Lady of Częstochowa resides.

It starts to rain as the three nuns and I exit the Częstochowa train station. At first, it drizzles, and then the sky opens in a downpour. We trudge ahead through puddles. The nuns open their umbrellas and beckon me to follow, my luggage slung over a shoulder. I am grateful for the kindness of strangers. Near the orphanage, the rain ceases. I tell the three nuns "Thank you" and bid them farewell. The nuns (Little Sisters of the Immaculate Conception) who operate the orphanage are grateful for the gift I have brought them—clothes from a mutual friend who has traveled in the socialist bloc. I am plied with instant coffee and toast with jam. Outside, the sun begins to peer through the clouds.

Jasna Góra is a short distance away. The religious shrine is visited annually by four-to-five million Christian pilgrims; only Vatican City and Lourdes receive more. The shrine's treasure is the icon of the Black Madonna with Christ Child, revered by the two churches that share seven Sacraments. Legend suggests Saint Luke painted the icon, which has survived trials by fire and sword and has been protected by Pauline monks since the 14th century. The Church's use of pilgrimages to Jasna Góra strengthened the will of Polish Catholics to resist the Marxist-Leninist regime. Numbering in the millions, the pilgrimages served as the key forum in which to speak openly without fear of arrest or imprisonment under communist rule. Wojtyla himself recognized the shrine's role shortly after his election as Pope John Paul II—the first Slavic pope—in 1978. Speaking in Polish during his inaugural Mass, the Pope said, "My dear fellow countrymen . . . I ask you: be with me at Jasna Góra and everywhere. Do not cease to be with the Pope who prays with the words of the poet, 'Mother of God, you who defend bright Częstochowa . . .'" The Pope declared in a radio address, "There would not have been this Polish Pope upon St. Peter's Capitol without Jasna Góra." Indeed, the Soviet Union might not have collapsed without the shrine. Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, in a 1992 interview in the Italian daily *La Stampa*, credited religion with a greater role in the Soviet collapse than any Beltway analyst preoccupied with "global democracy."

Pilgrims pray fervently before the Black Madonna on the day of my visit. I hear Russian and Ukrainian spoken along with Polish. Some pray while shuffling on their knees. Others are crying. Perhaps this is the universal Christianity, uniting East and West at Jasna Góra, envisioned by Russian Vladimir Sergeyevich Soloviev (1853-1900), a theologian and philosopher whose books have influenced John Paul II.

Jasna Góra played an important role in the conflict between Islam and Christianity. Muslim armies seeking to conquer Europe have been defeated in three crucial battles: Tours, Lepanto (October 7, 1571), and Vienna (September 12, 1683). On these fields, aggressive Muslim hordes were defeated by defensive Christian armies. Charles Martel, Don John, and Polish King Jan Sobieski III led successful battles for God and homeland.

During my visit, I saw four unmarked frescoes depicting Sobieski's visits to Jasna Góra. Sobieski led the Slavic and German army that defeated the Ottomans at Vienna and made pilgrimages to Jasna Góra before and after the battle. His message to Pope Innocent XI after the victory read simply: "*Veni, vidi, Deus vicit.*" A guidebook does not mention the frescoes, but a French priest confirmed their existence for me. In a nearby room, I found a vivid reminder of the French adage "*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*": a 17th-century painting depicting a massacre of Slavic religious put to the sword by the ancestors of today's Muslim terrorists.

Greg Kaza served three terms (1993-98) in the Michigan House of Representatives.

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by Srdja Trifkovic

The Jihadist Fifth Column: The Cure

Contrary to numerous optimistic assurances from high places, three years after September 11, the reach and operational capability of Islamic terror cells remain strong. They are present in areas previously closed to the recruiters of future "martyrs"—notably in Iraq—and in countries where, only a decade ago, they did not have a significant presence (*e.g.*, Indonesia). The United States has been temporarily spared fresh outrages, but the rest of the world has not, and it is to be feared that there will be many more New Yorks, Balis, and Madrids in the years to come.

Al Qaeda and its loosely linked offshoots are diversifying their range of possible targets to include vital infrastructure and energy installations in the West. They are also fielding a new generation of recruits, many of them Muslim immigrants and their offspring in Europe and North America. The decentralized pattern makes countermeasures difficult, especially with self-motivated young people deeply embedded in Western host societies—such as the five young U.S.-born Yemenis from upstate New York convicted last year of plotting terrorist attacks, or the eight U.K.-born British citizens of Pakistani descent charged last summer with plotting attacks on financial institutions in the United States.

It is alarming that the political class in the United States remains unwilling to examine the implications of the existence of a large Muslim diaspora in the country. Law-enforcement and intelligence professionals privately admit that the existence of that multimillion-man presence is essential in providing the terrorists with the recruits, the infrastructure, the mobility, and the relative invisibility without which they would not be able to operate, but neither the September 11 Commission's final report nor a host of related statements and proposals from both ends of the duopoly have acknowledged that reality.

That there is a correlation between the presence of a Muslim population in a country and the terrorist threat to that country is a demonstrable fact. Muslims are the only group that harbors a substantial segment of individuals who share key objectives with the terrorists, even if they do not all approve of all of their methods. They are the immigrant group least likely to identify with America: In response to a survey of newly naturalized citizens, 90 percent of Muslim immigrants said that, if there were a conflict between the United States and their country of origin, they would be inclined to support their country of origin. In Detroit, 81 percent of Muslims "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" that *sharia* should be the law of the land.

This internal threat to America is increasing. In the aftermath of September 11, various estimates of the Muslim population of United States have been made, ranging from two to nine million. The number of mosques and Islamic centers is around 2,000 and keeps growing. The total number of mosques increased 42 percent between 1990 and 2000, compared with a 12-percent average increase among evangelical Protestant denominations and a two-percent average increase among old-line Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox groups.

Immigration into the United States from the Middle East—around 1.5 million now, and expected to rise to 2.5 million by 2010—is likely to be exceeded by Muslim immigration from the Indian subcontinent (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh). Currently, Muslims account for one tenth of all naturalizations, but their birthrates exceed those of any other significant immigrant group. The number of U.S.-born children under 18 with at least one parent born in the Middle East will zoom from 600,000 today to just under a million by 2010.

A long-term counterterrorist strategy is impossible as long as these trends remain undiagnosed and unchecked. The application of ideological and political criteria in determining the eligibility of prospective visitors or immigrants has been and remains an essential ingredient of any antiterrorist strategy, and Islamic activism should be treated as eminently political, rather than "religious," activity. The problem of Muslim influx, however, is inseparable from the phenomenon of Islam itself—and, in particular, from that faith's impact on its adherents as a political ideology and a program of action. The notion that terrorism is an aberration of Islam, not a predictable consequence of the ideology of *jihad* that is inseparable from it, reflects a flawed elite consensus that must be changed. Only then can a coherent program of political and legislative action be developed to make America truly safer.

The preliminary to any such effort is to seal our borders. Preventing illegal immigration is a desirable objective *per se*; in the context of stopping terrorists, it is mandatory. The means exist, the political will must be found. The September 11 Commission's final report says: "[B]etter technology and training to detect terrorist travel documents are the most important immediate steps to reduce America's vulnerability to clandestine entry." That is incorrect. Better technology is needed, but "the most important immediate step" is controlling the borders. Knowing who is already in the country illegally, expelling them, and stopping illegal newcomers is the highest priority. State and local law-enforcement agencies should be enlisted in enforcing the law and protecting national security.

Law-enforcement agencies at all levels should be freed from the irrational ban on "profiling." Not all Muslims are terrorists, but, for some years now, nearly all terrorists of concern to America's national security and to the quality of life of her citizens have been Muslims. "The development of terrorist indicators has hardly begun," the September 11 Commission's report says, "and behavioral cues remain important." This is correct, and it is therefore time to accept that "profiling" based on a person's appearance, citizenship, origin, and apparent or suspected beliefs must be an essential tool of the trade of law enforcement and the "War on Terror."

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The essential legislative step forward would entail enacting new immigration legislation to exclude all persons engaged in Islamic activism from America. Such activism should be defined as propagating, disseminating, or otherwise supporting *jihad* (in its primary sense of divinely sanctioned war against non-Muslims); discrimination against Christians, Jews, and other "infidels"; discrimination and violence against women; the sanction of slavery, a poll tax, *etc.* Islam's violent manifestations and its discriminatory scriptural message are inseparable. Adequate safeguards against the adherents of that message must be put in place. The proposed definition of Islamic activism would be a major step in the direction of denying actual or potential terrorists a foothold on our shores.

This new legislation should treat a resident alien's or prospective visitor's known or suspected adherence to an Islamic worldview as excludable—on political rather than religious grounds. The broad model is provided by the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act (INA, the McCarran-Walter Act). The "affiliation" in this clause will affect a number of people who do not actively identify with the goals and methods of the jihadist core. That may be unfortunate, but it is inevitable. Personal assurances by individuals thus affected cannot be taken at face value: Islam not only allows but *mandates* lying to "infidels" in order to gain political or any other advantage (cf. *taqiyya*—the concealment of one's Islamic beliefs to non-Muslims). The problem is well known to INS officials: Attitudes of Muslims who apply for U.S. visas or asylum often change once their status in America is secure.

In addition, it will be necessary to mandate registration of Islamic centers and their individual members with the attorney general and to subject them to the security supervision and legal limitations that apply to other cults prone to violence. All over the Western world, Islamic centers have provided platforms for exhortations to the faithful to support causes and to engage in acts that are morally reprehensible, legally punishable, and detrimental to the host country's national security. The model for the proposed measure exists in the McCarran Internal Security Act of 1950.

Islamic activism should be treated as grounds for the exclusion or deportation of any alien, regardless of status or ties in the United States, and for the loss of acquired U.S. citizenship and deportation. The presence in this country of any visitor, resident alien, or naturalized American who preaches *jihad*, discrimination against "infidels" and women, the establishment of *sharia*, *etc.*, is inherently prejudicial to the public interest, inimical to social harmony, and injurious to national security.

Useful precedents for these proposals do exist. Keeping out and facilitating the expulsion of politically undesirable foreigners has been at the heart of our immigration legislation since 1903, when Congress barred the admission of anarchists in response to President McKinley's assassination. After the Russian Revolution, foreign communists were singled out for deportation. On one night alone in January 1920, more than 2,500 "alien radicals" were seized in 33 cities across the country and deported to their countries of origin. Those who preach *jihad* and *sharia* should be treated in the same manner. "Ideological" grounds for deportation were on the statute books as late as 1990 and need to be reinstated.

Last, but by no means least, affiliation with Islam should be taken as grounds for denial or revoking of any level of security clearance. Such affiliation is incompatible with the requirements of personal commitment, patriotic loyalty, and unquestionable reliability that are essential in the military, law enforcement, intelligence services, and other related branches of government. The presence of practicing Muslims in any of these institutions presents an inherent risk to its integrity and undermines morale.

Acceptance of these proposals would represent a new start in devising a long-term defense against terrorism. They reflect the seriousness of the struggle. This war is being fought, on the Islamic side, with the deep conviction that the West is on its last legs. It is time to prove them wrong with truly robust measures of self-defense.

Other changes are needed, too, but they concern global issues that require a shift in strategic thinking. The United States should reduce her dependence on Arab oil. She must stop appeasing jihadist ambitions in Chechnya and the Balkans. The neoconservative policy of global dominance, of which "exporting democracy" to the Middle East is but one manifestation, is self-defeating. Unbalanced support for one side in the matter of Israel-Palestine is irrational and, in the long term, detrimental to Israel's long-term security.

These proposals are politically viable. They are likely to elicit an outcry from the elites, but the accusation of "discrimination" cannot apply to a proposal to exclude people not on the basis of their genes but because of their ideas, actions, and intentions. Supporting these proposals will be a boon to any politician bold enough to embrace them. A poll sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations and the German Marshall Fund of the United States found considerable support—79 percent—for a total ban on visitors and immigrants from Muslim countries, and these proposals are far from advocating such radical solutions.

Ultimately, the outcome of the War on Terror will depend on our ability to define ourselves and to understand the nature of the threat. "If you know the enemy and know yourself you need not fear the results of a hundred battles," says Sun Tzu. <c

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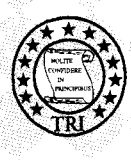

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Out on a Limb: America's Pledge to Defend Taiwan

by Ted Galen Carpenter

Washington's implicit commitment, under the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, to defend Taiwan from attack is becoming more perilous by the year. Given Beijing's increasingly insistent demands that Taiwanese leaders cease their efforts to spurn reunification with the mainland, there is a very real possibility that the United States will someday be called upon to honor that commitment. What most Americans do not understand is that we would be virtually alone in coming to the aid of the beleaguered island if the People's Republic of China (PRC) attacks. Washington's friends and allies in East Asia would likely leave America in the lurch.

That danger became apparent in late August during a visit by Australia's foreign minister, Alexander Downer, to Beijing. Downer told his Chinese hosts that they should not assume that Australia would assist the United States if a military conflict broke out in the Taiwan Strait. Australia's alliance with the United States, Downer stressed, only covered attacks on the United States or his country; it most assuredly did not cover contingencies involving Taiwan. His statement came as an unpleasant surprise to U.S. officials, who had assumed that the alliance with Australia was a general security partnership that could be invoked to deal with any threat in the region.

Downer's comment is not the only recent instance in which East Asian countries have tried to distance their policies from Washington's on the Taiwan issue. Just days later, Singapore warned Taiwan to avoid actions that might provoke Beijing and create a military crisis in the Taiwan Strait. As had Australia, Singapore stressed that she would not come to Taiwan's aid if the island's increasingly assertive efforts to consolidate her *de facto* independence from China led to armed conflict.

Those comments reflect the growing concern throughout East Asia that tensions over the Taiwan issue are beginning to reach alarming levels. Such concern is warranted.

When National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice traveled to Beijing in July, she got an earful from Jiang Zemin about China's views regarding Taiwan. Although Jiang was no longer president of the PRC, his statements still carries considerable weight. Jiang stressed that China was committed to the "one country, two systems" formula for Taiwan's status and that Beijing would "never" tolerate an independent Taiwan. He went on to denounce the Bush administration for its policy of selling sophisticated arms to Taiwan—most recently, submarines, a missile-defense system, and radar that can penetrate deeply into PRC territory and facilitate strikes by Taiwanese aircraft.

The substance of such comments was not new, but the tone was unusually firm. Moreover, Jiang's statements are simply the latest in a series of developments that suggest that Beijing's patience on the Taiwan issue is running out.

Long gone is the cavalier attitude of PRC leader Deng Xiaoping in the 1980's that the Taiwan issue could remain unresolved for decades without unduly upsetting Beijing. As Taiwan has democratized and accelerated her quest for international recognition, Beijing has become noticeably less sanguine.

A Chinese government white paper issued in 2000 emphasized that the Taiwanese authorities could not expect to stall negotiations for reunification indefinitely. For the first time, Beijing indicated that it might consider such delaying tactics sufficient grounds for resorting to military force.

Since then, the PRC has increased her confrontational posture. Just before the inauguration of Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian for a second term in May 2004, the PRC agency in charge of policy toward Taiwan issued a lengthy and revealing statement. On the one hand, it offered a number of prospective benefits to Taiwan if the regime there accepted the principle of one China. On the other hand, the statement made it clear that the consequences to Taiwan would be dire if the island continued her separatist ways. There was also a distinct implication that the issue must be settled in years, not decades.

And Beijing is backing up its language with substantive military measures. The PRC has expanded deployment of missiles on her side of the Taiwan strait; she now has more than 500 missiles arrayed against Taiwan. In late July, the Chinese government announced that its soldiers would practice for the first time a D-Day-style invasion, conducting mock air, sea, and ground operations on Dongshan, a densely populated island off the mainland coast. Perhaps most ominous, there are reports that the PRC has begun a program to build a large number of amphibious landing craft.

As the PRC grows stronger economically and militarily, it is logical that the determination to regain the "lost province" would also grow. Moreover, Chinese leaders suspect (with good reason) that time is not on their side. Younger Taiwanese, in particular, regard the mainland as an alien place and have little enthusiasm for reunification. Beijing fears that the prospect of regaining Taiwan may be lost forever if action is not taken relatively soon.

Trends on both Taiwan and the mainland thus create a very real prospect of war. They also put the United States in an extremely delicate and dangerous situation, because the nations of East Asia have repeatedly signaled that they will remain neutral in any U.S.-China dust-up over Taiwan.

The statements by Australia and Singapore are the latest evidence of that neutrality. It is clear that both countries were sending Taiwan a blunt message, but they were also sending one to the United States: Do not count on your friends and allies in the region to help you fulfill your commitment to defend Taiwan. Given the statements and conduct of the East Asian countries regarding Taiwan over the past decade, that should not come as a surprise to Washington.

Virtually all of the East Asian governments made a concerted effort to distance their policies from that of the United States when the Clinton administration dispatched two aircraft carriers to the western Pacific to demonstrate concern about rising tensions in the Taiwan Strait in 1996. South Korea and the Philip-

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pines both stressed that their "mutual" defense treaties with the United States did not cover contingencies in the strait. Such countries as Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Australia contented themselves with the banal response of urging restraint on all sides, conspicuously declining to endorse Washington's moves. Indeed, they echoed Beijing's position that Taiwan is a renegade province. Even Japan, the principal U.S. ally in the region, merely expressed "understanding" of the naval deployment.

The reluctance of America's professed friends and allies in East Asia to take a hard-line policy toward China extends beyond the Taiwan issue. That point became clear in April 2001, when a Chinese jet collided with a U.S. spy plane that was conducting surveillance from international airspace. The collision forced the U.S. plane to land on China's Hainan Island. PRC authorities kept the plane and held the crew for nearly two weeks—until Washington conveyed a carefully worded expression of regret for the incident.

During this period of acute tension, what was the response of America's East Asian allies? Vocal support for the U.S. position was notably absent. Even Washington's treaty allies in the region—Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines—declined to say that a U.S. apology to Beijing was unwarranted. Only Singapore's elder statesman Lee Kuan Yew unequivocally supported the U.S. position.

Japan's ambiguous stance epitomized the reaction of America's East Asian partners. Kauzuhiko Koshikawa, a spokesman for Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, stated: "We strongly hope this case will be settled in an appropriate and acceptable manner." Beijing could take as much comfort as Washington from this comment.

The responses of the various East Asian countries in both episodes underscore an important point. China's neighbors have no incentive to antagonize that rising power by backing the United States in disputes that do not seem vital to—or even relevant to—their interests. We can expect neutrality in most, if not all, future confrontations between the United States and the PRC. Beijing has cultivated the tendency toward neutrality through astute diplomacy that has lessened Beijing's abrasive image among its neighbors while quietly underscoring the PRC's economic importance to the economies of those nations. For example, China this year will likely supplant the United States as Japan's largest trading partner.

China's growing economic significance to the region reveals a subtle but potentially lethal defect in Washington's overall East Asia security policy. Because that policy developed during the Cold War, Washington could operate with the confidence that there would not be a tension between the economic interests of its security clients and their security relationships with the United States.

The situation is now more ambiguous. A chilly relationship (to say nothing of an armed skirmish) between the United States and the PRC would put the other East Asian countries in an extremely difficult position. Most of them have extensive investments in China and maintain lucrative trade with that country. A Japanese scholar's explanation for his country's unwillingness to endorse publicly the U.S. deployment of the Seventh Fleet in 1996 was most revealing. He did not cite the danger that a military collision between the United States and China might lead to Chinese attacks on Japanese territory because of U.S. bases there (although that is a very real danger). Rather, he emphasized concerns that an endorsement of U.S. policy might jeopardize Japanese investments in China.

The changing economic and political environment in East Asia raises serious questions about the wisdom of Washington's commitment to defend Taiwan—especially given Beijing's growing impatience over the reunification issue. Not only could the United States find herself entangled in a perilous military confrontation with China over Taiwan, she might have to wage the ensuing struggle virtually alone. Taiwan would undoubtedly contribute to her own defense, but the reaction in various East Asian capitals to Beijing's menacing behavior in recent years suggests that assistance from Washington's other "friends" would be problematic at best. Washington had better take that factor into account when it calculates the prospective costs and benefits of its security pledge to Taiwan.

Ted Galen Carpenter, vice president for defense and foreign-policy studies at the Cato Institute, is the author or editor of 15 books on international affairs. His book, The Coming War With China over Taiwan: Inevitable or Avoidable?, *is forthcoming from Palgrave/Macmillan.*

PROPERTY

Robbing Peter, Paying Wal-Mart

by Steven Greenhut

When Americans debate the merits of Wal-Mart, the discussions often become contentious, centering on whether this megaretailer is a corporate predator that drives wages down and Main Street businesses into ruin or is a corporate good guy because it offers decent jobs to the jobless and low prices to consumers.

Whatever one's opinion of Wal-Mart, there should be no contention on one simple point: Wal-Mart, Costco, Home Depot, and other big-box stores should not leverage their political power to convince cities to use eminent domain to drive property owners off their land to make way for the newest superstore. Nor should these retailers receive taxpayer-funded subsidies to finance the construction or operation of these stores.

Yet such abuses are common practice today, made even more common since 1981, when General Motors convinced the city of Detroit to obliterate an entire neighborhood, Poletown, so that it could build a Cadillac assembly plant.

Poletown was a humble but nice working-class ethnic neighborhood with more than 1,000 homes, 600 businesses, several churches, and a hospital. When GM wanted the neighborhood cleared, local officials argued that Poletown had to be sacrificed to boost the entire region's economic viability.

The homeowners and merchants were being selfish for trying to defend their close-knit neighborhood, the plan's supporters said. The good of the few had to be sacrificed for the good of the many. The case was a departure from earlier eminent-domain actions; officials did not contend, for instance, that the neighborhood was a dire slum in need of destruction for the good of the residents. Instead, they made a regional economic argument: Detroit's future hinged on GM's ability to build the Poletown plant.

The Michigan Supreme Court ruled in favor of GM and the local officials, and thousands of people were driven out of one the city's most settled and decent neighborhoods. "The power of eminent

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domain is to be used in this instance primarily to accomplish the essential public purposes of alleviating unemployment and revitalizing the economic base of the community," the court opined in 1981. "The benefit to a private interest is merely incidental. . . . If the public benefit was not so clear and significant, we would hesitate to sanction approval of such a project."

That decision, although applying only to Michigan cities, was watched closely nationwide. It gave the green light to other cities to begin arguing that economic development was sufficient justification for the use of eminent domain to transfer properties from one private owner to another.

Never mind that GM's promises never materialized; the plant never offered the jobs and economic uplift that GM used to sell the project.

Following the Michigan Supreme Court's ruling against Poletown, many other courts upheld similar aggressive takings. "In 1998, the Kansas Supreme Court held that taking the homes of 150 families to make way for the privately owned Kansas Speedway . . . was a public purpose," reported the *Wichita Eagle*, in a fairly typical government action and court ruling.

Every day, small property owners lose their properties without a fight or a mention in the newspaper. According to the Institute for Justice, a Washington public-interest law firm that represents property owners, localities have used or threatened to use eminent domain to benefit other private parties 10,000 times over the past five years.

The threat is as ominous as the actual use of eminent domain. When a mugger puts a gun to someone's head, he rarely has to pull the trigger. Most people hand over their wallets. Likewise, when cities "negotiate" for a property when they have the power of eminent domain behind them, most owners simply cave in and sell at unfavorable terms.

Fortunately, in July 2004, the Michigan Supreme Court overturned the 1981 Poletown decision. It was 23 years too late for the original residents of that community, but the recent ruling will slow the abuses in Michigan, and it is likely to be considered by other courts in other states, as legal challenges continue.

The decision was reviewed because it was used as justification for other takings, including Wayne County's attempt to take private land to build a technology park. The current justices called the original decision

> a radical departure from fundamental constitutional principles. . . . [I]f one's ownership of private property is forever subject to the government's determination that another private party would put one's land to better use, then the ownership of real property is perpetually threatened by the expansion plans of any large discount retailer, "megastore," or the like.

In 1981, in his dissenting opinion, Justice James L. Ryan argued that,

> With regard to highways, railroads, canals, and other instrumentalities of commerce, it takes little imagination to recognize that without eminent domain these essential improvements, all of which require particular configurations of property—narrow and generally straight ribbons of land—would be "otherwise impracticable"; . . . [I]t could hardly be contended that the existence of the automotive industry or the construction of a new General Motors assembly plant requires the use of eminent domain.

In 2004, the court referred to Ryan's sensible arguments.

There is still an enormous way to go before the abuses stop. Eminent domain is a dangerous tool for any use, and it has been abused over the years for the benefit of the railroads and by the builders of the Interstate Highway System. It is unconscionable to use it for the purpose of benefiting corporate America at the expense of average homeowners, farmers, and small-business owners.

Wal-Mart and other firms love to talk about the American way of free enterprise and competition, yet they embrace Soviet-style land-clearing policies whenever it suits their bottom line. Some cities are so eager to gain the tax revenues that the large retailers produce that they will use any power available to them to secure these stores.

In Cypress, California, in 2002, the city council condemned a property owned by the Cottonwood Christian Center, which was planning to develop a campus-like worship center and church. The city intended to sell the land at a cut rate to Costco. Costco even began marketing restaurant pads on the site before it owned the land. The city was frank about its rationale: Churches don't pay many taxes, but Costcos pay oodles of taxes. Boosting a city's revenues is a "public use," which justifies the taking.

After a long and costly fight, a federal judge granted a preliminary junction that eventually postponed the action and forced the city to craft a compromise plan with the church. In the decision, the judge argued that, if Cypress's actions are the standard for property rights in America, then property rights no longer exist.

In Lakewood, Ohio, the city voted to condemn an entire park-front neighborhood, declaring that the historic, beautifully kept homes were actually blighted because they lack air conditioning (near Lake Erie!) and attached garages. The goal was to move the middle-class residents out of the area and to replace the homes with fancy condos and restaurants geared toward an upscale clientele. A grassroots campaign that included a referendum and a mayoral recall stopped that plan.

Too often, eminent domain is used by the rich and powerful to steal from the poor and the middle class. The movers and shakers in Lakewood rallied behind the condo developers, just as the movers

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and shakers backed GM when it coveted the Poletown neighborhood. The *Wall Street Journal*'s John Fund uses the term *LOOT* to refer to Leaders Of Our Town, which is a sad commentary on how Main Street businesses and middle-class homeowners are forced to fend for themselves when eminent domain is threatened. The media typically print civic-booster stories about the Great New Project, ignoring the plight of property owners who must face eviction by government force. Without courage and resources, homeowners get bulldozed.

Eminent domain had been abused in the past on behalf of railroad companies. Many rail lines meander in a manner similar to congressional districts, as railroad companies, which were granted the power on behalf of the government, sometimes took convoluted routes so they could grab as much land as possible.

Despite that exception, the courts generally insisted that the Fifth Amendment hold firm: Public use meant things that are genuinely public. Thinking changed dramatically in 1954, when the Warren Court offered its ruling in *Berman* v. *Parker*, a case regarding a redevelopment plan in Washington, D.C., that transferred property from one private owner to another. In a decision that reads like a sociology textbook rather than an explanation of constitutional reasoning, Justice William O. Douglas wrote for the majority:

> If those who govern the District of Columbia decide that the nation's capital should be beautiful as well as sanitary, there is nothing in the Fifth Amendment that stands in the way. . . . If owner after owner were permitted to resist these redevelopment programs on the ground that his particular property was not being used against the public interest, integrated plans for redevelopment would suffer greatly.

The area at issue in the District of Columbia was genuinely blighted, by most standards. Other cities, however, kept pushing the envelope, and, by 1981, any excuse would serve the greedy interests of city officials and corporate raiders who gladly use political muscle rather than the market to achieve their ends.

The overturning of Poletown is a major step in the right direction. Other cases, including the injunction in the Cypress case, have pushed the pendulum back in a constitutional direction. On March 1, 2004, the Colorado Supreme Court rejected the Arvada Urban Renewal Authority's attempt to use eminent domain to take a private lake from its owners so that a portion of it could be filled in to support a Wal-Mart.

Earlier this year, the Connecticut Supreme Court decided to allow New London to condemn an historic waterfront area of homes, many of which had been in families for generations, so that condos and stores could be built to service a new Pfizer headquarters. Fortunately, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed in September to review the case.

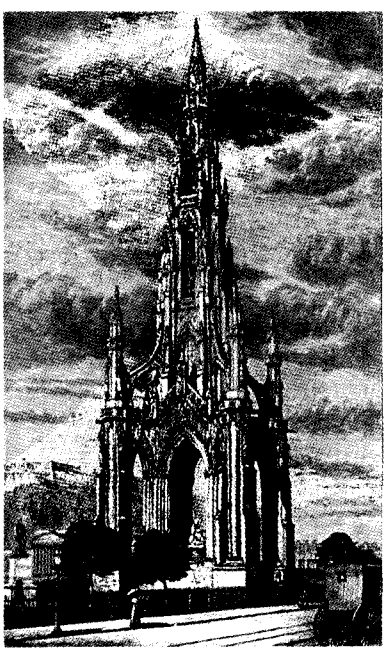
This review is the most promising news yet. If the Supreme Court follows the lead of Michigan and Colorado, the Fifth Amendment will be upheld, and Wal-Mart, Costco, and other eminent-domain-abusing companies will have to do business by dealing with willing sellers rather than relying on government force.

Steven Greenhut is senior editorial writer and columnist for the Orange County Register *in Santa Ana, California and the author of* Abuse of Power: How the Government Misuses Eminent Domain *(Seven Locks Press). He can be reached at* sgreenhut@ocregister.com.

Walter Scott *Versus* the Scottish Enlightenment

(Edinburgh, May 22-27, 2005)

Scholars on the right blame the Enlightenment for the social and political ills that plague our own times. In the eyes of these same critics, however, the Scottish Enlightenment of David Hume and Adam Smith merits praise for a less radical approach to questions of personal liberty and for an enthusiasm for free markets. Is this a reasonable analysis of the two Enlightenments? At least one man did not think so: Sir Walter Scott, whose body of work, including a remarkable biography of Napoleon, was a reaction to the French and Scottish Enlightenments. The Convivium will include a special lecture on Robert Louis Stevenson, sightseeing in the city that he described as "what Paris was meant to be," and a few days spent exploring the Scottish Highlands. Guest faculty will include Emory University professor of philosophy Donald Livingston, a scholar of David Hume.



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TELEVISION

It's a Wonderful Racket

by Kevin Michael Grace

Q magazine once regularly asked rock musicians the question, "How do you react when you see a nun?" Bryan Adams replied that he had the highest respect for nuns and thus reacted accordingly. He added that he had recently learned that nuns no longer wore their traditional habits, and that he was distressed by this change. My reaction was to wonder where Bryan had been for 30 years and what had led him to believe that nuns still sported the old penguin suits. Television, that's what.

TV's presentation of the Catholic Church, especially in commercials, remains resolutely pre-Vatican II. Nuns wear floor-length skirts and wimples; priests wear black suits and dog collars; monks wear sackcloth and tonsures. Churches are always neo-Gothic and feature stone altars, banks of dripping votive candles, confessionals, and Gregorian chant—the whole Council of Trent.

Television has little interest in the *condition* of the Church; it just likes the *symbols*. This explains why its occasional sallies into Catholic debate are more risible than offensive, *pace* William Donohue and the Catholic League. *Nothing Sacred*, the short-lived ABC drama Donohue succeeding in killing, would have been *passé* during Paul VI's papacy, with its ever-so-earnest young religious determined to drag the Church ("kicking and screaming") into the (insert number here) century while fearlessly confronting issues torn bleeding from yesteryear's headlines.

TV networks don't like controversy *per se*; they like to be on the side that's already won. So don't expect many televised dramas about the "clerical abuse" scandal that's bleeding the American Church white. This would require an examination of the "lavender mafia," and advertisers aren't going to touch *that* with a ten-foot crozier.

Madison Avenue persists in its use of the Church's superannuated symbols because these symbols comfort consumers. There are two types of such commercials. In the first, a priest, monk or nun is so impressed by a product (usually some advance in technology) that he or she raises his or her eyes to the skies in thanks, to the accompaniment of a mighty C-major organ chord or heavenly swell from the choir. In the second, a priest, monk, or nun is so impressed by a product (usually some "decadent" food) that he or she is prepared to risk his or her vows of obedience, poverty, *etc.*, in order to consume it.

The message of the first ad: God is on our side; the message of the second (if only in jest): The Devil is. Many complain that these ads are puerile. True enough, but they are also tributes to the enduring power of folk memory. The old symbols comfort because they radiate authority. The reason we don't see "Father Dave" with his open shirt and sports jacket in these ads is because he has no authority.

Generations of modernist theologians have practically consigned Heaven and Hell to the rubbish bin, but these reactionary notions live on in commercials. In one for Red Bull, Saint Peter complains that his presence at the Pearly Gates is now surplus to requirements, as this energy drink "gives you wings." And the angelic spots for Philadelphia Cream Cheese provide a pleasing echo of the Rev. Sydney Smith's famous pronouncement, "My idea of Heaven is eating pâté de foie gras to the sound of trumpets."

One in five Americans says he has been touched by an angel or knows someone who has. There are a lot of George Baileys out there, which explains why *It's a Wonderful Life* has become *the* Christmas TV tradition. Of course, it doesn't hurt that Frank Capra's classic preaches a particularly American gospel: Money *can* buy happiness. We are led to think of George Bailey as a saint not merely because of his lifelong sacrifices but because we are shown what would have happened to the people of Bedford Falls if George's savings and loan had not been there to write them mortgages: the secular damnation consigned by the rented accommodation of Pottersville. And what saves George from "bankruptcy, disgrace and prison"? The goodwill, even the love, of his townsmen isn't enough. George always had that; it is their whip-round that rescues him.

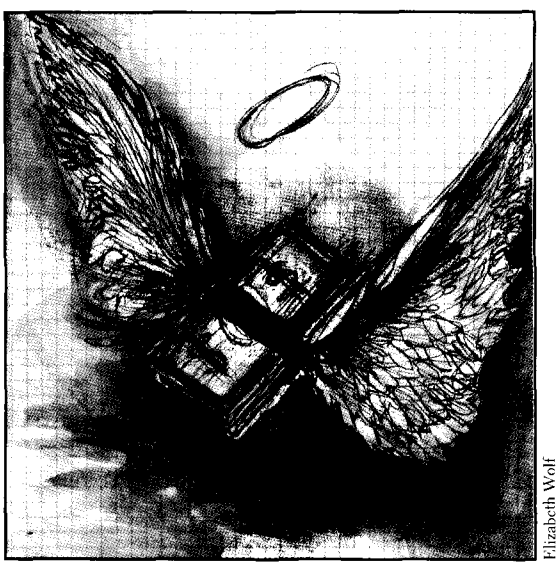
Despite its latter-day reputation, *It's a Wonderful Life* is not exactly a "feel-good" experience. Jimmy Stewart's portrayal of George Bailey's breakdown, his terror, rage, and despair, is harrowing to behold. So it is hardly surprising that a war-weary America was indifferent to the movie in 1946. Twenty-eight years later, Republic Pictures thought so little of it that it refused to pay a nominal fee to renew the copyright.

So *It's a Wonderful Life* entered the public domain and then the collective consciousness. Television stations could run it for free, and, soon enough, it was playing several times a day every day in every market during the month of December. TV turned this flop into a hit, so much so that there can hardly be an American alive who doesn't know the story of how Heaven sent a blundering angel to save a good man and a good town from Mr. Potter's predatory monopoly capitalism.

What happened next can be regarded only as proof of the Angelic Doctor's belief that God created the world in the spirit of comedy. Much as Mr. Potter raged that his renters had slipped from his grasp, Republic Pictures raged that "America's holiday classic" had slipped from its grasp. George Bailey had God on his side, but Republic had the Supreme Court, which ruled in 1993 that copyright holders of movie source material maintained some property rights even if copyright of the movie itself had expired. On that basis, Republic (a division of Viacom) reclaimed, and successfully enforced, sole ownership of *It's a Wonderful Life*. It then sold the exclusive television rights to NBC (a division of General Electric). It will not enter the public domain again until 2041.

Clearly, Mr. Potter was born too soon.

Kevin Michael Grace runs the website TheAmbler.com.



Elizabeth Wolf

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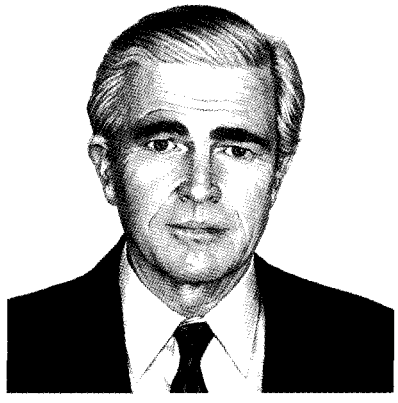
by George McCartney

Nostalgia's Rearview Mirror



The Motorcycle Diaries
Produced by South Fork Pictures
Directed by Walter Salles
Screenplay based on The Motorcycle Diaries *by Che Guevara and* Traveling with Che Guevara *by Alberto Granado*
Distributed by Focus Features

Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow
Produced by Brooklyn Films
Written and directed by Kerry Conran
Distributed by Paramount Pictures

It was Marshall McLuhan's opinion that we are all hopelessly nostalgic. We drive into the future, he claimed, with our eyes glued to life's rearview mirror. Who would disagree? Two recent films show us just where such backward gazing can lead. The first takes us disinguenuously astray; the second sends us magically over the rainbow.

Brazilian director Walter Salles' *The Motorcycle Diaries* demonstrates that those who indulge a nostalgia for charismatic leaders of the past are often taken in by cheap icons, especially if their sense of history is thin. Salles counts on such thinness to foist on the unsuspecting an idealized story of the seemingly innocent young man who would become the vicious revolutionary Che Guevara.

Since his 1967 assassination in Bolivia, Guevara has been packaged by the Marxist faithful as a communist saint. But, as recovering Marxist Christopher Hitchens (if you can call becoming a neoconservative recovering from Marxism) put it recently, there's more Byron than Marx under the wrapping. That is why capitalistic opportunists have been so successful at marketing Che as a provocatively romantic commodity. The iconic photo of Guevara taken by fashion photographer Alberto Korda in 1960 still adorns walls, T-shirts, and beer cans. It was once on boxed soap powder with the slogan "Che washes whiter." With his unshorn locks escaping dramatically from under his red beret, his wispy beard declaring his eternal youthfulness, and his large, liquid eyes looking soulfully into the middle distance, Che has proved an irresistibly beautiful icon. His death at 37 clinched his celebrity among the cadre of useful idiots who are always with us.

Now Salles is doing his part in the hagiographical cause. His film traces the 5,000-mile trip the 23-year-old Guevara took with his pal, Alberto Granado, in 1952, riding a dubious 13-year-old Norton 500 motorcycle through Argentina, Chile, Peru, and Venezuela. On the way, Guevara was first scandalized and then radicalized by the crushing poverty he witnessed among the lower classes. Why, one wonders, hadn't he noticed this before his 20's? Latin America's ruling classes have never made a secret of how they treat the poor. To be fair, as an asthmatic son of wealthy parents, he was no doubt insulated from the unpleasant world about him. His eyes finally opened, he came to hate his own class. When he teamed up with Fidel Castro in 1956 and sailed to Cuba to foment revolution, he was determined to spread the movement throughout South America. Like most communist ideologues, Che became persuaded that it was perfectly permissible to break as many eggs as needed to make the classless omelet. He seems to have had no compunction about killing innocents for his cause. With Castro, he sought the support of peasants in the Cuban hills, receiving it more often than not from people too frightened to refuse. As in Russia, China, North Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, and all the other Marxist paradises, those who would not go along were put to the wall and shot, not infrequently by Che himself.

Reportedly sensitive in youth, Guevara grew up to be a cold-blooded, ruthless revolutionary whose hatred of the middle class from which he sprang and of the United States, the bastion of bourgeois democratic success, led him to call for a thousand Vietnams. His bloodlust was such that it was he, not Castro, who wanted to launch the Soviet nukes at us during the missile crisis of 1962. He was an idealistic brat whose desire to reform society curdled into self-righteous cruelty when his benevolent intentions met resistance. Hell hath no fury like a revolutionary punk rebuked.

You would never know this from Salle's film. He only lets us see the idealism, the romantic soulfulness of the young, delicate Guevara played prettily by Mexican heartthrob Gael García Bernal. There's no reference to Guevara's later years and deeds. The soul of this dishonest film is as ugly as its scenes of the Andes and the Peruvian Amazon are gorgeous.

That *Motorcycle Diaries* has been received with such uncritical enthusiasm by conventionally liberal critics testifies once again to the fatuous complacency of so many in our supposedly well-educated middle class. These are well-meaning souls who think they can demonstrate their social conscience by singing the praises of such men as Guevara, men who would unhesitatingly put them to the wall if doing so would advance their revolutionary cause a few feet farther along the road to utopia. Tellingly, formerly leftist commentators such as Hitchens have been sharply critical of the film and Guevara himself. Like recovering addicts, they have no illusions about the nature of the drug they're dealing with. This nostalgic fix delivers a lethal impact.

Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow exhibits another kind of nostalgia altogether. Before going on, let me first state my prejudices. Any film that features a dirigible docking at the mast of the Empire State Building automatically earns my endorsement.

After some swooping shots of the Brooklyn Bridge and the Manhattan skyline beautifully rendered in velvety black-and-white, first-time director Kerry Conran cuts to an updated version of the famous 1936 promotional photo that was doctored to simulate just such a mooring. This picture was run in newspapers around the world as though it were the

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real thing. In those more innocent times, editors saw no ethical reason not to give their readers an advance glimpse of what they had been assured was about to happen anyway. And that is why many to this day think it did. Such credulity was encouraged at the time by no less a personage than former New York governor Al Smith, one of the building's principal promoters, who had convinced the city fathers that they needed not only the world's tallest building but an airport for the rich and powerful over midtown Manhattan. So the tower we know today was built to house huge winches that were to reel in the mooring cables dropped from airships arriving several times a day. Then, belatedly, inconvenient physics quashed the futuristic plan. The wind shear a quarter of a mile above the pavement would make it impossible to hold a dirigible by its nose and keep it still enough for passengers to disembark into the cylindrical mast that would itself be swaying in the breeze.

Such scientific niceties have not deterred Conran and his mighty Mac graphics programs, however. He has reached back to this historical goof as one of his many nostalgic inspirations to construct a computer-generated film about a fictional 1939, perhaps the last time people could be reflexively comfortable with the prospect of technological innovation. Through the magic of Conran's Mac, we're able to watch passengers descend from the *Hindenberg III* on a narrow gangway as though they were doing nothing more adventurous than taking the down escalator at Macy's.

The ride, however, is not as smooth as it seems. Reporter Polly Perkins (Gwyneth Paltrow in slouch hat, belted raincoat, and a flowing mane of Veronica Lake hair) is contacted by Walter Jennings (Trevor Baxter), a very troubled passenger. They meet at Radio City Music Hall, and, while *The Wizard of Oz* plays on the screen, Jennings confides to her that he was one of a team of German scientists who had been asked to do unspeakable things during World War I. Now these men are disappearing one by one, and Jennings is sure he is next. He is being pursued by a certain Dr. Totenkopf—a name that would frighten anyone, since it's German for Death's Head, the skull-and-bones insignia adopted by the Nazi SS. Suddenly, outside the theater, dozens of 50-foot humanoid robots appear in the streets, marching in clanking ranks, scattering cars and pedestrians before them. The authorities immediately call in Joe Sullivan, a.k.a Sky Captain (Jude Law), an heroic flying ace. He quickly dispatches the robots from his fighter plane and, incidentally, saves Polly from being minced under their metallic heels. Once on the ground, however, he has an unpleasant encounter with the gal reporter. It seems the two have a "history." He accuses her of having sabotaged his plane in Nanjing before dumping him. "It's been three years; you're not still mad, are you?" she asks coyly. He is. Furthermore, he rejects her wish to come along as an embedded journalist on his expedition to find the evil Totenkopf. Needless to say, Polly will be at his elbow every step of the way, and, while the two seek the deadly doctor's headquarters in Nepal, they will bicker ceaselessly about who betrayed whom in Nanjing.

Sound familiar? It's supposed to. Conran has lovingly revived his favorite conventions from the movies of the 30's and 40's, especially Saturday-afternoon serials and B features, and put them on his computer-generated stage. His actors played their scenes against a neutral blue background which he later filled in with all the elements of period film fantasies, from dirigibles to Shangri-la. He has even brought Laurence Olivier back to life as a sort of oracular Wizard of Oz. Visually, the film is enchanting. It has the look of the tinted photos of the 1940's—as well it might, since it was shot in black and white before the color was added. Faces have the complexion of old ivory, except for their cheeks, which are daubed in hectic pink. Women's lips aren't painted red; they are incarnadined until nearly black. Multihued backgrounds fade into a sepia wash. The result is a caressingly nostalgic dream.

Dramatically, Conran has not been quite so successful. His script is too slavishly faithful to the cornball originals he likes so much. His affection for this material comes perilously close to reverence at times. He has instructed his actors to play their comic-book roles straight, and they do so in a manner that lets much of the fizz out of the pop. Furthermore, although Conran has invested the script with a good deal of wit, it is not as sharp as it should be. In interviews, Conran has said he wanted his dialog to remind us of what we have heard in the films of Howard Hawks and Preston Sturges. His aim is high, but I am afraid that he has missed his target almost as widely as Dorothy's tornado-blown house missed Kansas on its way down. Reaching the Himalayan foothills, Sullivan throws Polly a thermal suit and snarls, "Your clothes stay behind; you won't be needing *high heels* where we're going." Later, when she is accused of lying, Polly haughtily simpers, "OK, I'm a liar, but I don't exaggerate." This is mildly amusing, but it is a far cry from Sturges' repartee in *Sullivan's Travels*.

Sky Captain has received a huge amount of attention not only for itself but for what it points to. Although it has not been a strong success at the box office, it moves the industry one step closer to the condition of pure film. Any visual one can imagine is now nearly possible with computer graphics. Soon there will be no need for remote locations, no need for stuntmen, no costly weather delays. The studios must be salivating. The savings will be astronomical. By some estimates, *Sky Captain* would have cost twice its $70 million budget had it been made conventionally. And then there is the next step: If Olivier can be made to live once more, speaking in his own voice lines he never uttered in life, how far are we from computer-generated performers? No more $20-million fees for the likes of Jack Nicholson. Of course, this means today's celebrities may have to get real jobs and stop bothering us with their leisure-time shenanigans. Certainly, there are worse prospects in our rearview mirror.

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Endings and Beginnings

The meadow sweeping from the treeline down to the lake below had turned yellow almost overnight, with purple patches of the frost-seared ground cover showing through. The lake surface was no longer a smooth reflection of the stony peaks, standing against the cold sky and dusted now with new snow, but an infinite series of parallel waves driven ashore by a hard wind. All summer, the Van Kirks, Ed and James, and I had fished the high lakes hard, driving up to the mountains in early evening and hiking out to the truck well after darkness, following the close of the long summer days. For weeks past the solstice, the shortening light had been nearly ignorable, before the early frosts hit. Now not summer alone, but the notion of summer as well, was dispelled. Summer was finished not for the year only but quite possibly—it seemed—forever. It was sad, but it was true, and there was no use being sorry about it. As I approached the bank, a lone duck of some sort, apparently underfledged and flightless, shot from the shoreline toward the middle of the lake, cutting a sliver track across the black water. There is not much future for a flightless duck on an 11,000-foot-high lake in early September in the Rocky Mountains.

I walked on around the lake, past the curious beaver swimming in circles at a distance from their lodge, toward a quartzite cliff falling almost at a right angle to the water. Standing on a boulder at the water's edge, I strung the number-six rod, selected one of Ed's dry flies from my flybox, secured it to the nine-and-a-half-foot 5x leader, and dressed the hackle lightly. I had not seen a rise on the lake since I'd walked out of the trees a quarter-hour ago, but fishing is one of those activities to which faith is necessary for success.

A 30 m.p.h. wind played hell with my casting, but the second try produced a strong swirl on the water's surface. I raised the tip as the rod bowed nicely and stripped in line, not too fast. These alpine trout fight hard and end up in the rocks if you give them their head. This one felt like a respectable fish, but not more than that: A really big trout creates a heavy, profound, pumping action on the rod. I took in another handful of line and saw the first flash of his silver side underwater as he fought the hook. Holding the rod above my head, I bent to wet my free hand in the cold water to receive him. He was a brook trout, about 14 inches long and well fleshed, red as blood on his underside. I held him by the lip with my thumb to keep him still, removed the barbless hook from his jaw, and returned him to shallow water. Then, I wiped the fly to remove the fish mucous and dried it, redressed the hackle, and paused for the wind to come right again. As I cast, a fresh gust caught the fly as it hit the water and lifted it into the air again, directly above the answering swirl.

Though I kept catching fish as I moved along the shore in the direction of the inlet at the north end of the lake, the summertime action was faded, almost past. The fish were still aggressive, but they were no longer berserk as they had been earlier in the season, missing the fly every other cast in their frenzy. As I went, I caught fewer brookies and more splake—the missile-shaped, fork-tailed cross between a lake trout and a brook trout, less colorful than brook trout but as good fighters, or better. The longest was around 19 inches and weighed perhaps a pound and a half. When my rod arm tired, I reeled in and hiked back through the dwarf willow and krummholz pine to the valley in which we were camped, keeping an eye out ahead for the yellow eye of a fire and the pale shape of a lone white horse.

I found the horse but not the fire; Maureen had kept a cold camp and retired early to the tent. I hallooed her from 50 yards out, causing the mare to turn a sour face toward me from the clump of trees in which I had snubbed her before leaving camp, six hours ago. I staked her on the picket line to graze the thin lakeside grass and sat with my back against a rock, consulting a flask of scotch before hunting up supper for myself. The wind poured through the pass above the head of the lake, raising waves a foot tall that crashed like ocean surf along the shore.

"It's going to be cold tonight!" Maureen called from inside the tent.

"Actually, it's warmed up in the last hour! It would be good if the wind would quit, though! It plays hell with the fishing situation!"

"Do you want me to get you something to eat?"

I turned the flask in my hand, admiring how its sterling-silver side flashed—like a fish—in the clear alpine twilight. *"I'm doing fine on my own, but thanks anyhow!"*

After supper, I snubbed the horse close again, took my rod, and walked down to the lake to learn if there was any action happening. The wind whistled, bending the upper third of the rod sideways as I went, and spray blew off the whitecaps like driven snow. I made a series of long casts with my back to the wind without provoking a swirl and was on the point of reeling in when the wind fell abruptly and died. Close inshore, a fish rose delicately, and then a second, the two circles expanding on the glassy surface to form an Olympic ring as a third fish came up. I cast to them, taking two of the three, and, after that, the lake died suddenly. You might as well have tried casting a fly to the talus slope climbing steeply from the water's edge as flog any more fish out of that lake. The trout were over now, and so was another summer.

"I'm through up there," Ed said when I saw him in town several days later. "Too busy now with other things. The shop will be done with my truck the day before the first day of antelope season."

He and James came by the house for me at a quarter past five that morning with the repaired Suburban hitched to a flatbed trailer carrying a wheeled game cart. It was a mild morning, but the wind was up before the sun, laying the roadside grasses over in the headlights. Leaving the truck at the rancher's gate, the three of us started on foot across the dark prairie, dressed in warm hunting clothes and taking with us only the guns, the shoot-

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ing sticks, and our hunting knives. We had hiked 400 yards before Ed turned from the two-track and cut cross-country another few hundred feet to a dry irrigation ditch, barely discernible in the coming light rising from behind the eastern mountains. Bent almost double in the shallow ditch, we proceeded toward the fence corner a quarter-mile off, until Ed signaled James and me to get down. Lying prone below the verge of the irrigation ditch, we studied a herd of grazing antelope, out 600 yards, through binoculars as the tan-and-white forms emerged imperceptibly from darkness into daylight. We braced the shooting sticks in the clay bank, chambered our rounds, and waited there behind the guns, watching the shifting forms.

"About a quarter of the antelope I've shot, I've taken from right here," Ed remarked in a stage whisper. "All we have to do is wait and they'll come in within shooting range, sooner or later."

The cold snap came just before the sun breached the mountains at our backs, stiffening my fingers and burning at the end of my nose. The early light showed traffic moving on the interstate to the north a couple of miles off, two small ranches out ahead about a mile, and, in the west, lion-colored foothills lifting against the mountain range where patches of golden aspen flamed among the black timber. The crows awoke and began talking back and forth, and, from a distance, a rifle report sounded dully.

"There's a couple of respectable bucks in that herd," Ed said, taking the glasses away from his face.

"It looks like they're moving this way," James suggested; "—sort of."

All of us heard the rattle of a diesel engine away to the left, beyond the next property line. Together, we watched through three pairs of binoculars as the flatbed truck stopped and three orange blips separated themselves from it.

"Now, things are going to *change*," Ed predicted. "Those hunters are going to kick these antelope our way. Are you ready, James?"

The hunters vanished behind an irrigation bank running north at a right angle to the one we lay in, but nearly an hour passed before ten or eleven does and fawns appeared over the top of the embankment at a run, headed toward our herd. The two bucks, having raised their heads for a glance at the commotion behind them, commenced to graze peaceably again. But the momentum applied at the rear of the herd as the two groups merged set the second in motion as well, and soon all 25 or 30 animals were moving along the fenceline out ahead of the ditch where they paused abruptly, the leaders feinting as if to make a turn toward the north. "Oh, don't do that," Ed urged under his breath. "That isn't what you're supposed to do." The antelope milled, looking one way and another, and then they were moving again, running this time in a wide arc that swung them around in the prairie swales and brought them directly in toward the ditch.

"You take the first shot," I told James, who looked at Ed, who nodded.

"You and I have the entire month to hunt antelope," he agreed. "James has school, and football after classes. Don't anyone move, now. Here they come."

The tall shooting sticks were a problem from the prone position. I piled three rocks on the verge of embankment, covered them with a woolen glove, and rested the forestock of the rifle across it, grateful that I did not have to shoot. Stretched beside me on the cold earth, James appeared comfortable behind his shorter sticks. The herd pounded on, drawing closer, then pulled up short at 300 yards. At this range, the better of the two bucks looked very good as he stood broadside to the ditch, his dark moon-creature eyes focused on the three inert human forms within it. The report of the .30-06 beside my left ear was not as loud as I'd anticipated. "It looked to me like you had a clean miss," Ed told James, as the antelope wheeled and fled into a shallow draw. "I had him scoped at the moment you fired. Dang! *Dang*!"

"It was a long shot," I offered.

"Too much movement," Ed decided. "They knew we were here: It's easier when there's just one person. So much for strategy number one. We can come back here this afternoon, if we feel like it. They're not that spooked; we only fired once. Why don't we take a look over the hill and see what's hanging out down along the river?"

Below the bluff, the Little Laramie wound through hay meadows and willows, past the rancher's house tucked inside a draw partway up the side of the cliff. The meadows were dotted with white-and-tan specks, several dozen of them. Ed laughed behind his binoculars. "They all came over *here*," he exclaimed, letting the glasses fall on his chest. "Let's go on back to the truck and have lunch."

We stood about the trailer to eat, keeping an eye on the prairie around, and were nearly finished with the meal when a doe antelope, followed by two fawns, bounded into the head of the draw coming up from the hay meadow.

"I wonder what got them moving?" Ed said. He picked up his rifle, walked over to the fence, and set up a careful shot from the top of the gatepost. Then, without having touched the trigger, he lifted the gun from the post as the antelope trotted on. "Do you suppose there could be something else coming along?" he added.

We finished lunch, packed the coolers into the truck, and climbed in ourselves. The Suburban was already started forward when the rest of the antelope herd appeared in the draw 250 yards out and started across at a trot on the far side of the fence. "*Go!*" Ed exclaimed, from behind the wheel.

James took a rest on one of the gate posts, and I took the other. He fired, a buck dropped, and I heard the *thwack* of the bullet hitting him. I missed my animal on the first shot and winged him with a second, another 50 or so yards farther out. Too far. It's what happens when you allow yourself to be seduced by a variable scope at long range. No fool like an old fool, as the wise man said.

"The Lunchtime Ambush," James said, looking modest.

"Good shooting," I told him.

"We need to try and catch up with that hit one," Ed said. "He has a hind leg dragging. I don't think he was hurt badly, though."

The wind, which had died before sunrise, blew hard now out of the west where shelves of gray cloud had formed, pushing out from the mountains. What had been a summer sky at sunrise had abruptly become a fall one, bearing its rumor of winter.

I removed the live round from the chamber and inserted it into the magazine. Then I pulled on the woolen gloves, turned up the collar of my hunting coat, and shouldered the rifle on its sling. "I'm going after him," I said. Suddenly, a solitary walk on the open prairie seemed like a good idea.

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by Thomas Fleming

Shop Like You Mean It

"Shop Like You Mean It" read the ads for a nearby mall every "Holiday Season." The obvious question is: Mean *what*? The ad agency probably wants us to get into the spirit of the season of wasteful expenditure and conspicuous consumption, but, if we interpreted their ungrammatical sentence not according to the intention but according to the words themselves, we might derive a useful lesson. Since most Christians are going to do some Christmas shopping this year, how can they make their spending spree significant?

I can think of many ways. The first and most obvious decision to make is to shop, wherever possible, at stores owned by other Christians or, at least, by families or companies who do not subsidize the campaign to take the Christ out of Christmas, out of schools, and out of our lives. Jesus kicked the moneychangers out of the temple. Why can't we, at least, refrain from going to the malls, chain stores, and websites where they have reset up shop?

How do you spot the anti-Christian stores? That is not too hard. They are the ones open on Sunday. They would be open on Christmas Day itself (as some Walgreens are), if they thought they would get enough business. I once argued with my father, an ex-Catholic atheist, that Jewish merchants had a right to open their stores on Sunday. The old man surprised me by pointing out that, not only did those store owners gain an unfair advantage over non-Jewish competitors, they forced Christians to violate the Sabbath—and their consciences. Although there are many Blue Laws I do not agree with, I am happy to see them observed. A local camera store (Camera Craft) won my loyalty when they put up a sign saying they were sorry if their Sunday closing caused any inconvenience, but they wished to keep the Sabbath holy.

The stores that open on Sunday are also the stores in which the clerks say "Happy Holidays," and, when you tell them you find the phrase anti-Christian and offensive, they wearily explain it is "store policy." I politely explain that it is my policy not to shop in any store that has an anti-Christian policy.

With corporate stores, the question is pretty easy. Why buy Christmas presents from corporations that advertise pornography, force Christian employees to work on the Sabbath, or give money to Planned Parenthood, NOW, People for the American Way, the ACLU, or the Southern Poverty Law Center? How can you tell which corporations do not do any of the above? The truth is that so many of them are funding anti-Christian campaigns that you would do best not to spend your money on any national company that does not advertise its commitments.

I asked Kathy Coll (*prolifepac.com*) about where to find detailed information on corporations that support Planned Parenthood, and she told me to go to Life Decisions International, which puts out a long list of antilife companies—including Bank of America, Adobe, Kenneth Cole, Unilever (which owns Calvin Klein) and Gannett. Life Decisions International can be contacted at *fightpp.org*. The American Family Association (*afa.net*) has information on a number of companies, including Procter and Gamble, which they accuse of promoting the homosexual agenda.

A more difficult trick is to locate national companies that are not aggressively anti-Christian. Several people I know do business with Sierra Trading Post (*sierratradingpost.com*), which advertises itself as adhering to a Christian business ethic, and Hobby Lobby posts signs proclaiming its Sunday-closing policy. Hobby Lobby also supports organizations that translate and distribute Bibles and places offensively Christian ads all around the country with such phrases as "Come to the manger this Christmas, Come to life eternal."

My own preference has always been to shop with people I have come to know and trust. I have already mentioned Camera Craft in Rockford, and I always try to give presents of secondhand books from the local bookshops or an Irish gift from the Tin Whistle or a gift pack of Italian food from an Italian grocery like DiTullio's. At Christmas, we send cheese from Baumgartner's Cheese Store & Tavern, (1023 16th Avenue, Monroe, WI 53566, (608) 325-6157). Although Baumgartner's does sell imported cheese, it is famous (in Monroe, at least) for having the best American-made cheese in these United States. Although they are not set up especially for mail-order business, they have always been courteous and efficient, and everyone who has received a present of their cheese has expressed delight and asked how to order it for himself.

If you like pistachios, the best we have tasted in a long time come from Eagle Ranch in Alamogordo, New Mexico (*eagleranchpistachios.com*). It is a family-run operation, but I do not know what, if any, is their policy on charitable giving.

With a little patience and time, anyone can do some meaningful shopping for Christmas presents. Avoid the chains (and the malls, if you can). Don't patronize the enemies of your Faith. But more important than the boycotts is to adopt a positive strategy of supporting the hometown merchants and manufacturers who give your neighbors jobs. The Estwing company in Rockford (*estwing.com*), as I only recently discovered, makes perhaps the best hammers (one-piece forged steel) and grip tools in America, and we have begun giving Estwing hammers as a practical (and beautiful) gift. Every American town has something to export, if only some local food products and recipes. Better a hammer or bag of pecans than the master collection of Cohen brothers films I am afraid I will receive some day. There's one for the chipper.

Money is not important in itself, but every dollar we earn represents an increment of time that we have worked, and every dollar we spend expresses our vision of the world as it ought to be. Much of our spending must inevitably be neutral: An obsession with saving the environment, opposing racism, or even buying American is a sign of an unsteady mind. There are more important things to do with our lives, and, if going to Kroger's or eating—ugh—at McDonald's is now and then convenient, do not waste time on repentance. On the other hand, if conservative Christians began using their buying power prudently, by shopping locally instead of globally, they would brighten the corners where they are.

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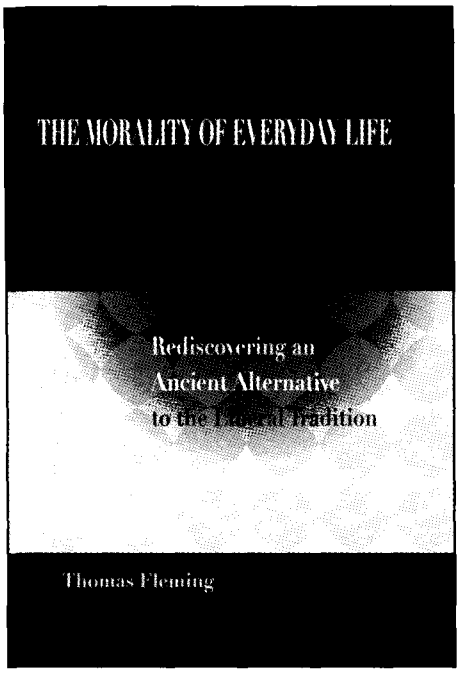

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Booklist

The Morality of Everyday Life: Rediscovering an Ancient Alternative to the Liberal Tradition

by Thomas Fleming

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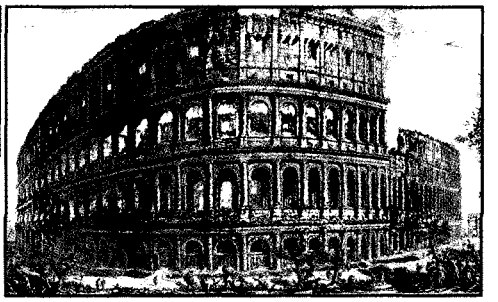

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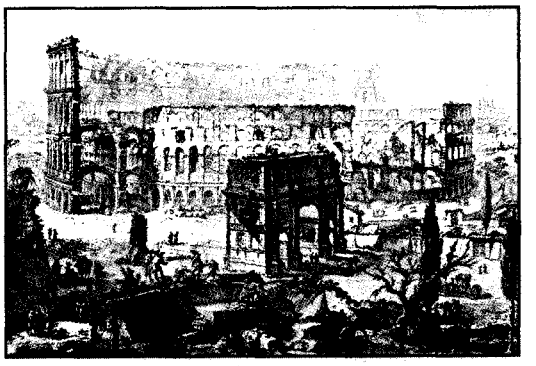

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